

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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REVIEW

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Let's call this the August, 1970 issue.

And let's say that SFR is edited and published the hard way by somebody
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"Geis, you bastard, you went on vacation and you didn't take me along!"

"Why should I, Alter-Ego? All you do is gripe and bitch and moan about my imperfections. Who needs that on vacation?"

"Oh, I don't mind you laying around in the sun and guzzling gallons of lemonade...what cranks me is all those movies you went and saw!"

"How did you—?"

"I have spies everywhere! I bugged your brain. You can shut me off but you can't stop my little synaptic recorder. You saw BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES, MAROONED, MYRA BRECKINRIDGE."

"True, but you didn't miss much."

"Raquel is pretty much in my book."

"Yes, but we can't discuss MYRA...it isn't s-f."

"Fantasy! It's fantasy, isn't it?"

"Not really. It's a botched movie that probably left its best parts on the cutting room floor."

"Geis, I hear it's crude, offensive, insulting, a slap in the face of everything Spiro holds sacred—"

"True. It often comes across as an exercise in stunning bad taste. But what most people who see it don't realize is that the crudeness and offensiveness is deliberate! It was planned. The snips and pieces of old-time films that were inserted were there to show that MYRA was the Yang to their Yin, the unstated, unpretty, raw, ugly id-basis of the 30s and 40s and 50s films...and thusly MYRA

is a ruthless exposure of America's soul: the sanitized surface and the sordid, warped depths. It's really a vicious movie. I'd like to see it again."

"Okay, but promise to sneak me in with you?"

"Yes, if you'll promise not to stomp and whistle and drool at the sight of a naked breast."

"Yeah, yeah! I'm civilized now, Geis. I'm cool! Now let's talk about BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE...er...BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES. Tell me about it. Was it as good as the first film?"

"No. It had all the faults of THE PLANET OF THE APES and none of its virtues. This sequel is simply an exploitation of the success of the first movie. It's a hack job, contrived, corny, incredible..."

"You didn't like it?"

"No one but a ten year old child would like it—that's the age-level it's aimed at."

"Well, give me an idea of the plot."

"You asked for it! The movie opens with two new astronauts landing on Earth as had the previous β , by way of a time warp or somethin'. Again only one survives very long, and he is fated by the script to relive Charleton Heston's encounter with the evolved, intelligent apes who are again fated to do their parody of mankind's prejudices and faults. James Franciscus plays the new hero."

"But something was added, Geis. I see the ads showing some kind of mutants."

"Oh, yes. It seems that in caverns beneath a taboo area there are the ruins of New York wherein live the few mutated remnants of civilized men who now worship an atomic bomb which is, significantly enough, still operational. These mutants have the power of telepathy and can cause total hallucinations in the minds of the astronauts."

"Astronauts? I thought you said—"

"Charleton Heston is still alive, having been captured by the mutants. They also capture Franciscus. Then the apes, in a hash of unmotivated actions and speeches, start to invade the mutants' land."

"Fighting? Violence?"

"Guh. The mutants try to impose one mass hallucination on the apes, it fails, and so they give up without further fight. No blocking of cavern entrances, no booby traps, nothing but prayer to the bomb and a suicide determination to activate the bomb and wipe out the ape's town. They do not realize the bomb is a doomsday type which will make all life on the surface impossible."

"So what happens?"

"Ohh...the apes invade the caverns and slaughter the mutants. Heston and Franciscus escape death at the hands of a mutant executioner who was trying to make them kill each other by controlling their minds. Of course the mutants conveniently didn't try this on the apes. The plot has no room for logic or plausibility."

"So what happened to the bomb?"

The two heroes try to prevent the activation. They get slaughtered by the apes for their trouble. With a last gasp Heston curses them all and pulls the last switch. The bomb starts to glow and rumble. Then the screen goes white and a voice-over intones something about it being recorded that

the inhabitants of the third planet from Sol proved incapable of living together or something...I've forgotten. The movie was so blatantly and crudely a message film that I don't want to think about it."

"Umm, wasn't there a girl in the picture?"

"Yeah. She ran around artfully half-naked and got killed in the ape invasion."

"But the special effects were good, weren't they?"

"Yuh. The apes' makeup and the shocking skinless effect of the mutants. The apes' village, too. But I had the feeling the movie was made to get more use out of the existing sets and costumes."

"But you wouldn't advise any self-respecting fan to see BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES, huh?"

"Not if he expects to see a good movie. If it's on with something good...maybe. Don't pay two or three bucks to see it by itself."

"Now that that's out of the way...what is your opinion of MAROONED?"

That will have to wait. I'm hungry. I've got to have some rye krisp with butter slathered on it and a cup of tea."

"Geis, your obscene eating habits..."

.....

"Okay...(urp)...now what was the question?"

"MAROONED, your opinion."

"It's a sf suspense story, is what it is, strung out to the last possible instant, with black moment after black moment, until it becomes ultimately incredible and silly."

"Nothing pleases you, does it, Geis?"

"Wouldn't say that. I enjoyed the movie. It is gripping and professional. It's worth a buck to see. It is adequately acted. It's just that the movie slowly but surely abandons reality and becomes too melodramatic and formula-ridden in its last stages. Suspense becomes all, and milking it to the last drop was commercially and dramatically correct, I suppose, but artistically Too Much. It became a cartoon."

"I overheard some fans objecting to the way one of the astronauts died when his suit was ripped open in space."

"Yes...that. He gave out two small mews of sound and didn't move a muscle as he strangled and froze in a hard vacuum. His skin color didn't even change. That's what I call discipline!"



"Hey, Alter! Come on up from down there. I want to talk to you. ALTER!"

"Don't bother me now, Geis. I'm busy."

"What are you doing down there in my thalamus? Listen, if you screw up my pulse again—"

"Our pulse. I read that people with slow heartbeat rates live longer. I figure if I can slow ours down to around sixty per minute..."

"Stop fiddling! Last month you nearly killed our body

from messing with the pituitary. Come on—UP!"

"Just trying to improve things. You got to admit we've never been that horny before. Man, three days of pure—"

"Never mind! I have some thoughts on sf magazines I want to bounce off you."

"Rubber thoughts. Nothing ever really heavy, eh, Geis?"

"Shaddup and listen. I just got through reading Ted White's depressing editorial in the October FANTASTIC. He—"

"Did you dig that awful cover? Looks like it was stolen from a sword and sorcery fanzine. Gray Morrow did it, and he is a professional, but it sure looks amateurish."

"I am not here to criticize the artwork...although as bad as the cover for this FANTASTIC is, you have to admit that the new logo for AMAZING and the cover for the September issue make it a different magazine. AMAZING now shows that indefinable thing called "class."

"That Jones cover is a winner."

"But Ted's editorial in FANTASTIC...he reports that thus far all of his changes in AMAZING and FANTASTIC have gone for naught. Circulation has not gone up. He lays the blame on the distributors who often do not in fact distribute all the copies of AMAZING and FANTASTIC that they should or could; in fact, he says they cheat and rob."

"Umm. And your plastic thoughts are?"

"That there is only room for one or two sf magazines on 90% of the newsstands, especially the supermarket and liquor store racks. The retailer and the distributor are unwilling to give sf any more space...and so ANALOG and F&SF are usually the ones which are displayed. Sometimes GALAXY and IF, rarely AMAZING and FANTASTIC."

"And how would you solve the problem?"

"It's insoluble. There are too many sf magazines for the space they are given for display. There are too many other, bigger, better selling magazines filling up the racks. Sf gets token representation. The only way to win in that kind of a battle is to either publish a "classier" looking sf mag (one that looks more respectable and "quiet" than ANALOG) or seek a different kind of distribution."

"What about putting the mags into college book stores? That's where the most sf readers are anyway."

"Right. But the logistics are probably such that it isn't possible, for good reasons."

"Well, Geis, how would you go about cracking the nut?"

"As to the bookstores, I don't know—I haven't enough knowledge of distribution practices and costs. But as to the newsstands—I would go to a larger format, as VISION OF TOMORROW has, and title the magazine simply SCIENCE FICTION, and use low key sf covers, striving for an aura of a quality package. No screaming banners, no loud blats about the new, GREAT story inside. A quiet, small, cover listing of well-known authors."

"That format would cost, Geis! You'd have to charge 95¢ maybe."

"Likely, yes. Well, we'll probably never know..."



BY DAMON KNIGHT

Speech Delivered at the 4th Baltimore SF Conference, February 21, 1970

Horace Gold, the former editor of GALAXY, is an intelligent, talented, sensitive, creative man to whom a lot of writers, including me, owe a great deal, and I tell you this because later on I'm going to knock him a little, and I want you to know it's because I have to do it to make a point.

Shortly after the first issue of GALAXY came out, I was talking to Horace on the phone and he asked me to write a letter to the publishers and tell them what a great magazine it was. Well, I thought that was a weird idea, but I was willing to go along, so I wrote a letter that began, "At H. L. Gold's suggestion, I am writing to tell you that I think GALAXY is an excellent magazine." They showed that letter to Gold, and he told me I was naive. I was so naive that I didn't know what naive meant.

I must tell you that I grew up in Hood River, Oregon, where they



**PRETENTIOUS
INTELLECTUALS.
snivelling FAGGOTS,
AND
THE MILFORD MAFIA**

grow apples. If there was anybody there to talk to, I never found out about it. My parents gave me the impression that they expected me to make some gigantic mark on the universe, and I was willing. But by the time I was eleven or twelve, I was getting discouraged, because everything had already been invented—you know, the wheel, the inclined plane, and so on. Then I wanted to be a writer, but I got to be seventeen before I had sold a story, or even finished a story, and I thought I was a washout, because there was a kid named Frank Kelly who had started to sell stories to the old WONDER when he was sixteen. Anyhow, I discovered fandom, through one of those fanzine columns in SUPER SCIENCE, I think, and I did some cartoons for Bob Tucker, and I published a fanzine called snide that lasted two issues. Then the futurians adopted me—because of snide, I guess. If it hadn't been for that, they never would have heard of me. So you see how precariously everything fits together. Anyway, I lived in futurian hangouts for several years, and tried to write stories, did a little illustration (bad), worked for Scott Meredith (bad), and finally got a job as an assistant editor at Popular Publications. Fred Pohl got me that job, and lent me a white shirt to apply for it. What's more he never got that short back until about 1955, when I bought him one.

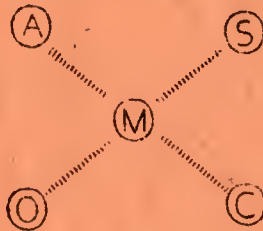
So I became a futurian, and Julie Unger said, "He was a good fan, until the futurians corrupted him." The funny thing is that it's the old futurian types, Wollheim and Pohl, who are now whispering it about that I am an evil influence. I call this funny, not because I'm knocking inconsistency, but because nearly everything I've done has some precedent in what they did years ago. Fred Pohl wrote honest and irreverent book reviews before I did. It was his STAR Science Fiction that provided the model for ORBIT. Wollheim, back around 1929, was the first to fight for authors' rights in this field—he sued Gernsback for non-payment, did you know that? (Later he sued me, but that's another story.) Wollheim was the founder

and leader of the Futurian Society—not much different from the Milford Mafia except that they lived closer together.

See, Katie and I run a thing called the Milford Science Fiction Writer's Conference every summer. Three-four years ago we got the word that Fred Pohl was beginning to refer to us as the Milford Mafia. We got a little sore at first, as were intended to, then it began to seem funny. Karen Anderson got a picture postcard with a Milford scene on it, and on the back she drew a big black hand and sent it to Fred. He didn't think it was funny at all. The next year I had some MILFORD MAFIA buttons made, and we all wore them to the convention. Those buttons, by the way, were terrifically popular with the teen-agers in Milford.

The question is, is there a Milford Mafia? I must tell you frankly that there is. At least, not in the sense that Fred means it, or Don Wollheim, that is, a conspiracy to undermine what we have left of civilization, but there is a network of loosely related power structures. To begin with, there's the Milford Conference. Then there are the Ace Specials, edited by Terry Carr, who comes to the Conference, right—and he publishes other people who come to the Conference, like Joanna Russ, or Madam Satan as we call her... then there's ORBIT, edited by guess who, which publishes a lot of the same people...SFWA, which I founded, and about half of whose officers have been Milfordites...you see how it all ties in.

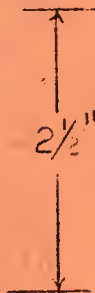
Then there's the Clarion Workshop in Fantasy and Science Fiction, run by Robin Scott, who copied it from Milford, with visiting lecturers, again including guess who and his wife, and Harlan Ellison, Fritz Leiber, Judith Merril...



Okay, this structure exists, it would be dumb for me to tell you that it doesn't. What I can do is try to tell you how it happened.

Okay, there I was in New York, at 18, with a lot of untested ideas, you know, that crime does not pay, honesty is the best policy and like that. And when it began to filter through to me that the world was not like that, not even my little part of it, the science fiction world, I had feelings of indignation.

So I wrote some indignant reviews of books I thought were bad. This was when book reviews in science fiction magazines were this long, and they told you the name of the book and the author, and the price, and finished off, "A must for all dedicated science fiction readers." Whether the book was garbage or not. So I kept writing those reviews, mostly out of indignation, and also because I saw that a simple necessary thing was not being done by anybody else.



Milford Conference, and dragged Jim Blish in, we had never been to a writers' conference, and didn't know that a conference was a bunch of paid professionals talking down to paying amateurs. We took the term literally. We sat our writers down in a circle and started them talking to each other. They've been talking ever since.

I freely admit that I was naive when I came east, and still am, but I think there's something to be said for that. It's possible to be so sophisticated that you know in advance that a perfectly simple and easy thing won't work, so you never try it.

Take another example. When was the Golden Age in science fiction? Anybody here think it was the sixties? The fifties? The forties? Okay, anybody older than that, forget it.

I thought the early forties were the Golden Age. ASTOUNDING, from about 1939, say, to 1942. Looking back, that's not much of a golden age. Because it slumped off, didn't it: by '44 or '45 there wasn't much left. Then around 1950, there was another one. GALAXY was started, and F&SF, and they were great for a few years. But it didn't last. I kept asking myself, why not? Once we get something like that, why can't we keep it going?

I used to dismiss the question by saying that in the forties there were six or eight good prolific writers, which is all it takes, but you can't count on that many in a field this small. I think now this is a copout.

Then there's the stupidity theory. You see a magazine running the same damn thing over and over, and you think, well, the editor is tired, or dianetics has addled his brains. But what do you make of an editor like Campbell, who has transformed his magazine every ten years or so—made it fresh and new, temporarily? Obviously he is not stupid.

Okay, then there's the flush toilet theory. I invented that one myself. I said that whenever science fiction started to get good and sell a lot of copies, processions of two-bit publishers would scamper up, and fill our flowing bowl, and then the whole thing would go down the drain. I think there is some truth to this, but it is not the whole truth.

I began to think it was a feedback problem. First you get an editor starting out brand new, and just because he's got a new magazine, a blank slate, people send him everything, and a lot of it is good stuff that the other editors have been bouncing, right? So for a year or two, on that and on momentum, everybody's enthusiastic and it's a great magazine. But every choice implies an exclusion. Every time you reject something, you lessen the probability that you're going to get anything like that submitted to you again. So this much of the spectrum gets cut off. Then out of this much, you select again, and you lose another section. And so on, until you're narrowed down to this.



Take the Conference. When Judy Merril and I started the

All right, now I'm going to come at this from a different direction. Bear with me, this will take a minute. In the fifties, I was one of GALAXY's regular contributors. Horace was buying everything I wrote, and that was cool. I must tell you by the way that I never could write when I had a job. But whenever I quit an editorial job, I wrote like crazy. Well, in 1950 WORLDS BEYOND had just been shot out from under me, and I started writing stories in quantity for the first time in my life. These were stories like "To Serve Man," "Cabin Boy," "Four In One," and so on. And Horace got used to buying that kind of thing from me. These were stories that were kind of light, a little bouncy, not terribly serious or important. Then after a couple of years I started writing things that were a little more serious, not quite so farcical—things like "Double Meaning," "Stranger Station," "Turncoat," which became part of a novel called Hell's Pavement, "Rule Golden," and so on. Well, Horace bounced these stories, and I had to sell them other places—THRILLING WONDER, F&SF, SPACE SCIENCE FICTION, and like that. I even sold one to FANTASTIC UNIVERSE. And my feelings were hurt, and my pocketbook was hurt too—those magazines paid less. And I thought then, wouldn't it be great if there were a magazine, the top of its field, paying the best rates, that would find some good writers and within very broad limits just let them write whatever they wanted to.

That was in the fifties, and that's why ORBIT is the way it is now. I found out that these limits had to be a lot broader than I ever expected. And they are getting broader by the minute. I buy a story in fear and trembling, in April, and in December that story seems to me a perfectly ordinary and conventional thing. Meanwhile I am buying something else, again in fear and trembling, and so it goes. I have to frighten myself to keep up with ORBIT.

You can have rigid standards of quality, or rigid requirements as to subject matter, but not both. So I'm letting ORBIT go its own way, because the alternative is to publish spaceman junk.

One of the things that is being most fiercely defended right now is the hairy-chested hero in science fiction. Well, there never was such a thing in science fiction until about 1930, it was a borrowing from pulp adventure fiction and never essentially a part of science fiction at all, if you want to be a purist. What Campbell did in the forties was to give science fiction an infusion from the general slick magazines, and Gold in 1950, the same thing except that he leaned more heavily toward lightness. If there is such a thing as pure science fiction, we haven't had any for about forty years.

After all, every editor has formed his own definition of science fiction. If we were going to have heresy trials, every one of these guys would have been burned at the stake. Gernsback said it was this. Gold said it was this. Campbell in 1939 said it was this—now he says it's this.



One thing you have to remember is that every time there is a change in science fiction, there are going to be some people yelling desecration. The famous stories of the forties and fifties were not universally admired at the time: Gernsback said that was not science fiction as he understood it. And so it goes. Today we've got people yelling about the Milford Mafia, and Poul Anderson talking about snivelling faggots in science fiction—I assume he means the characters, not the authors. Well, this always happens. You've always got somebody who liked the old stuff better. Sorry about that.

Things are changing so fast. Look at GALAXY and IF, even—used to be the stronghold of conventional science fiction. Now they have psychedelic covers, and the material's getting a little psychedelic, too. And I am told that their circulations are going up.

Institutions don't come up out of the ground and they don't fall from the sky. They are made by people. If you don't like the ones you find around you, make your own. I don't mean this is easy. I mean that if you want it badly enough, you will do it. Once you have shown that a thing works, people will come and use it. The Milford Conference is creeping westward, putting out a tentacle as far as Clarion, but not because of any sinister conspiracy, just because the Conference works, and also because Robin Scott is a very bright guy.

Now I'm not trying to con you that this power structure doesn't exist. You can see it does, these relationships exist. I could have drawn you another diagram of the older power structure, if I'd wanted to—Campbell, Gold, Sam Mines, Scott Meredith. I could have shown you relationships. There always are some. If there weren't, we wouldn't have any publishing. The interesting question, it seems to me, is not whether the structure exists but has it done good or harm? SFWA's record speaks for itself, I think. We got \$9,000 in back royalties for J.R.R. Tolkien, and another \$9,000 for Andre Norton. We are now putting over \$6,000 a year into writers' pockets directly, in royalties from the Nebula anthology, and many times that indirectly. We've stimulated interest in science fiction so that there's a bigger pie to cut up.

ORBIT, aside from anything else, has bought stories from over forty writers—a large clique—and it has paid out to writers about \$25,000. That's just ORBIT, but we also now have Harry Harrison's NOVA, Bob Silverberg's NEW DIMENSIONS, Bob Hoskins' INFINITY, David Gefford's GENERATION, and Chip Delany's WARP. Four years ago there were three editors buying short fiction in this field—Campbell, Ferman and Pohl. Now there are nine.

I don't think I can prove that the Conference has ever helped anybody, because there's no way to show that people wouldn't have improved just the same without it. There is some testimony, though, and the fact that people come back year after year. Now Clarion is a different situation, and there, at last count, out of 22 full-time students who had not sold previously, 15 have now sold stories. That's not a wishy-washy record.

Now I will discuss some relationships in this first dia-

DAMON KNIGHT CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

PERRY RHODAN

Or—Germany's Late Answer
To Pulp SF Serials

Star-eyed Major Perry Rhodan, the powerfully muscled Captain Clark G. Flipper, controlled Lieutenant Dr. Eric Manoli, and the short, thick Captain Reginald Bull, Bully for short, these four men are the crew of the spaceship STARDUST on its way to the moon.

Everything is under control until a disturbing signal destroys their apparatus and their peace of mind, and they are forced to land on the moon, where they find a spherical spaceship from an older, and alas much wiser civilisation.

Only two aliens are still alive, the female commander Thora and an old scientist, Crest, who is dying from a disease which destroys his race, the Arkonides, a special form of blood cancer. Although they look down with scorn upon the human race, they need their help now, to save Crest.

The discovery of the alien spacecraft, however, starts a weapon race between the Eastern and the Western power-blocs, and in order to avoid a nuclear war, Perry Rhodan lands in the Gobi desert where he forms the Third Force, a power bloc between Russia and the USA...

We were in Summer 1961, and Germany's answer to pulp SF, Doc Savage, Doc Smith and Captain Future had just been born. Even the creator of Perry Rhodan, Clark Darlton (pseudonymous for Walter Ernsting), one of Germany's top SF authors, cannot possibly have foreseen the success the series would obtain through the years.

Darlton's novels had been published by Erich Papel Verlag, in Rastatt in Baden, and by Moewig Verlag, in Munchen for many years in their dime novel series. When he approached Papel Verlag with the idea of a serial, continuing with one central character through the series of novels, they turned it down, thinking that the time for such serial series was long past.

Darlton then went to Moewig, and together with K.H. Scheer, another of Germany's most read SF authors (specialising more or less in SF adventures and space operas), they created finally PERRY RHODAN, DER ERBE DES UNIVERSUMS, starting with Operation Stardust, The Third Force, The



INHERITOR OF THE UNIVERSE

Radiant Dome, Finale of the Gods, Galactic Alert, The Mutant Corps and Invasion From Space.

Of course, though the two of them did write most of the P.R. novels, they could not possibly write a novel every two weeks (as these dime novels are weekly), so other respected and well-read authors were approached and continued the series, among them W.V. Schols, Kurt Mahr, Kurt Brand (C.R. Munro); and more recently H.G. Ewers and Ernst Vlceck.

Perry Rhodan didn't stay long on Earth. Other quests led him and his crew through the past and the future of Earth and many other planets light years from Earth. Immortal now, and semi-superhuman, they are the leaders of the Galactic Imperium. Now, when the recentest Perry Rhodan dime novel should be about issue 460 (yes, four hundred and sixty) one could be surprised that they still find new races and new foes to battle, new secrets to solve.

Of course, through such a never-ending serial, Perry Rhodan himself is not the central hero of all the novels; thousands of other characters are introduced, some return through a few series on quests of their own to the betterment of the Galactic Empire.

The series has become a dictionary of SF: name any theme in SF; robot societies, immortality, SF humour, psychological introspective SF, mutations, space operas, tragedy, superminds, time twists, you'll find it all there. More, you'll find all of mainstream literature woven in through them: the romance, the war novel, the western novel, the mystery novel or thriller, the psychological novel, theology even.

Of course, don't expect something which would win a Hugo or a Nebula: remember, most of P.R.'s fans are between 12 and 16, but any adult will enjoy the P.R. novels as well, once he gets over the rather dated starting novels.

The many authors who have contributed to the series also make for interesting differences, not exactly in style but specially in the way of treatment of their subjects: K.H. Scheer's are mostly fast-moving action stories; Clark Darlton prefers themes to do with time twists and with the real essence of time and space, and humanity's place in them; Kurt Mahr and H. G. Ewers blend fast action with super-science, while William Voltz and Kurt Brand take special care of the psychology of their characters with the action.

The success of Perry Rhodan in Germany in the success of Doc Savage, Captain Future and Skylark in the USA, as well as Batman, Spiderman, the Hulk, Superman, the Flash and all the other super-heroes.

BY EDDY C. BERTIN

Perry Rhodan is a man to look up to for Germany's SF fans, specially the very young generation. Immortal, almost invincible, master of an ever-expanding galactic empire, and yet still human, it has been said that Perry Rhodan is the image of a new Fuehrer, with militant and fascist tendencies, which is too stupid to merit comment.

Perry Rhodan is the image of Man, every man who has the courage to face the universe and say "I AM MAN. What are YOU?"

If all answers were friendly, there would hardly be much left to write about, so the Galactic Empire stumbles from one war into another. I can specially recommend the parts concerning the threatening interdimensional collision of our Einstein universe with the other-dimensional universe of the Druuf, which runs somewhere through numbers 70-80.

Inspired by the great sales of the P.R. dime novels, who run now to 300,000 copies a week, not counting the constantly reprinted earlier issues, Moewig Verlag started the Perry Rhodan Planet Novels, a beautifully executed paperback series with excellent covers, which started in 1964 with Clark Darlton's Planet of the Mock and Kurt Mahr's The Great Thinker of Gol. Every month a new novel appears (the most recent being #71) which features a complete story in itself, with characters from the Galactic Empire (almost never P.R. himself) and related to the serial novels.

While we just mentioned the covers, it is an interesting point to note that several covers of the P.R. novels have also been used the last three years as front covers for the American AMAZING and FANTASTIC magazines, and that one of the colour covers of a P.R. Planet Novel has appeared about 1964 as a black&white illustration of a short story!

1967 was the year of the first Perry Rhodan film, which was presented at the SF film festival at Trieste, and first shown in Munchen on 8 September 1967. The film, PERRY RHODAN—S.O.S. OUT OF SPACE (American release title: OPERATION STARDUST) was made as a joint effort between Italy and Germany, and directed by Primo Zeglio, with Ritter Von Theumen as technical adviser. The spaceship of the Arkonids was created in the studios of Depapolis films in Rome, and the moonshots were filmed at Tenerife.

The film stars Lang Jeffries, Essy Person, Pinkas Braun, Ann Smyrner, Joachim Hansen, David Martin, and cost one million US dollars. The story keeps itself to the first Rhodan novels, until the creation of the Third Force and Rhodan fights with a gang of criminals who want the alien spaceship for their own. A special paperback novel illustrated with film stills was brought out.

But other changes were in hand in 1967: Moewig had stopped the publication of TERRA SONDERBAND, a series of digest-sized papercovered novels and story collections of SF, after some 48 issues, and now they also stopped their two other greatest series: TERRA, a series of dime novels which had started in September 1957 with Nothing Can Save Earth Now (Wolf D. Rohr) and Non-Stop (Aldiss) and which has published almost any American, English or German SF author you can name, in its exact 555 issues; and TERRA EXTRA,

which had been started in September 1964 with K.H. Scheer's For Special Use and Darlton's The Eternal Law and specialised in reprinting out of print classics and semi-classics of SF. The series made it for 182 continuing issues.

The TERRA novels (a paperback series, which started with #100, The Dream of the Machine (Hans Kneifel) in August 1965) was kept but the name changed to MOEWIG NOVELS-SF, the most recent being #172 (in reality #72).

A new series of dime SF novels, TERRA-NOVA, replaced the earlier TERRA with its first issue Death Gardens of Lyra by Ernst Vleck. They are still going strong to issue 120 now.

A new paperback series began, SPACESHIP ORION, starting with Attack From Space in 1968, and the most recent being #23.

The space-opera series are all written (with one exception by Vleck) by Hans Kneifel, and are based in the 7-parts TV serial created by Rolf Honold and W.G. Larren.

Moewig's latest experiment is a co-series to Perry Rhodan with another character, the immortal Arkonid ATLAN as central hero. Issue 1 appeared in October 1969: The Galactic Syndicate by K.H. Scheer, and the next in November, Struggle for Power, also by K.H.S. They are monthly so now will be at their 4th issue.

Don't think that Perry Rhodan is exclusively a book publication. There are P.R. playing cards (several series, featuring sections of the covers of the novels and titled "Central Characters" "War Space Ship" "Aliens" etc.), P.R. toys, a fan-published P.R. encyclopedia, a freshly started comic strip, P.R. buttons, not counting the thousands of P.R. Fan Clubs that have been created everywhere. It seems that P.R. is here to stay.

France was the first other country to adopt the P.R. series. One of France's biggest paperback publishers, Editions Fleuve Noir, started a H.S. sery (Hors Serie: Special Collection) with



quality covers, print and paper in February 1966 with OPERATION ASTREE.

They made it a habit to publish always two P.R. novels as one volume, rather irregularly every three months (now even French authors appear in the H.S. series, no longer making it a P.R. exclusive), and have published now about 30' or 40 of the original dime novels.

Holland followed the next year when Born Paperbacks in Assen started publishing the novels in a specially created paperback series in 1967. Each paperback had 96 pages, selling for 20¢ and the series was intended to be a monthly with translations by W. G. Roos.

After only six pbs however, Born dropped the series, and Romanpers (Novel Press) in Amsterdam took over in the Summer of 1969 and published them exactly as the German series as a pulp two-weekly magazine, with the original covers and inside illustrations. They continued where Born left off, with issue 7, selling for 26¢. They are still going, with the most recent issue being 16 so far.

The United States continued, with Gwendayne Ackerman (the wife of Forrest J. Ackerman) translating the first 140,000 words for Ace Books, New York. Ace adopted the same system as France, by publishing two novels under one title.

1969 saw the publication of the first 3 paperbacks, selling for 60¢: Enterprise Stardust by K.H. Scheer & Walter Ernsting (which includes also The Third Force), The Radiant Dome by Scheer & Ernsting (which includes also Finale of the Gods) and Galactic Alarm by Kurt Mahr & W.W. Shols (which includes also The Mutant Corps).

If the series is continued in the same vein (notwithstanding a few rather unsatisfactory reviews, mainly in fanzines who are howling about a cheap revival of pulpish super-science), American readers can expect the following titles in the future: Invasion From Space by Ernsting & Mahr, Help For Earth by Shols & Scheer, and Space Battle in the Wega Sector by Scheer & Mahr.

Once Perry Rhodan was an established success, it was to be expected that other publishers of dime novels would try to get their part of the action. Erich Papel Verlag in Rastatt/Baden had already a good-selling series of SF novels with UTOPIA, a series started through Clark Darlton in 1953 (the first in Germany!) which started with a pulp hero, Jim Parker, but later published anthologies as well as novels by Fred Pohl, Campbell, Weinbaum, Hubbard, Leinster, Sturgeon, St. Clair, the French Stefan Wul, the Pole Stanislaw Lem, and many German authors, as well as the full Captain Future series.

UTOPIA ZUKUNFTROMANE lasted for about 480 issues; their co-series UTOPIA GROSSEBAND (digest-sized paperbacks) for 204 numbers.

Papel also issued UTOPIA KRIMINAL and UTOPIA MAGAZINE (the official organ for the SF Club of Germany in 1955), and Papel paperback SF novels.

Papel started with MARK POWERS, HERO OF SPACE with

Slave Hell of Jupiter, #1 of the two-weekly pulps. Mark Powers and his companion Biggy battle all kinds of foes and aliens, save Earth and the universe every second week from all kinds of deadly perils, from soulless robot armies to time traitors and human conspiracies. In contrast to P.R., each novel was a whole in itself. The first book mentioned no author, but most of the later ones, before the series was cancelled after 48 issues, were written by Alf Tjornsen, Jeff Mescalero, H.G. Francis, M.G. Wegener, Axel Nord and W.P. Hofman.

Bastei, in Bergisch Gladbach, tried it in 1967 with REX CORDA, SAVIOR OF EARTH, created by H.G. Francis and M. Wegener: June 1992—Earth has accidentally gotten in the middle of a conflict between two powerful galactic races, Orathon and Lakton. Corda and his friends try as hard as possible to get Earth out of it in one piece.

Two other publishing houses, Hallberg SF, from Verlag Schalter & Co. in Deilinghofen (which has a dime novel series mostly of German authors, monthly, last issue known #211 in 1967) and Zauberkreis SF from Zauberkreis Verlag, Rastatt/Baden, kept away from space-hero serials.

Martin Kelter Verlag, in Hamburg, however, is still surviving with the series created by Kurt Brand in 1966: RHEN DHARK, ROAD INTO SPACE. The serial is written by several different German authors and it seems is still going, though of course absolutely no competition for the P.R. series.

Trying to solve the problem of overpopulation, Earth sends the space cruiser "Hope" out in the year 2050. The ship crashes on a far and unknown planet, and Rhen Dhark, son of the original ship Captain unites his new world and then goes back in search of their home world. He rediscovers Earth, which has been enslaved by an alien race, the Giants. Rhen Dhark becomes the leader of the United, a force which tries to free Earth once again from their masters.

It is doubtful, however, if Rhen Dhark will also survive in reality, because Kelter has already issued several "Sammelbande", which means two or three older Rhen Dhark novels under one cover and for a cheaper price.

Once pulp publishers start to get rid of their left-over copies that way, it is a sure sign that not enough copies are sold the usual way through book stalls and subscriptions.

So very possibly, Rhen Dhark will join (or maybe he has already joined) Jim Parker, Mark Powers, and Rex Corda into oblivion.

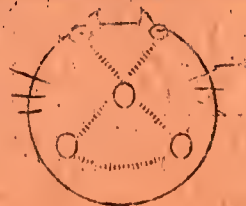
And...maybe...PERRY RHODAN will survive, as inheritor of the Universe of German SF.

—Eddy C. Bertin
Jan. 15, 1970

DAMON KNIGHT CONTINUED

gram which I have been concealing from you. You realize, of course, that I bought some of those stories for ORBIT. And you also know that Terry Carr is the editor of the SFWA Forum; so...

There you have it; and I thank you.



Reviewed by John Foyster

Allegory seems to be the in thing this year: let's see what can be made of this one.

A group of aliens (Strines) on a planet far from the Galactic Centre, having reached a suitable stage of development, decide to seek admittance to the Galactic Federation, the local Big Wheels. The Strine High Council decides that the best way to accomplish this is to show the Federation that the Strines are ready to run what is called a "Worldcon".

The "Worldcon" is a gathering which takes place once every solar year and, at the present time, almost all the "Worldcons" are held on Federation planets. But the Federation has occasionally allowed non-Federation worlds to become hosts in the past. The Strines hope that they will be allowed this opportunity.

However, a recent move in the Federation makes it possible for the "Worldcons" to be held on non-Federation planets quite frequently. The Strines are concerned: this makes it more likely that they will be lucky enough to host a "Worldcon", but they wonder whether the non-Federation "Worldcons" will serve the purpose they once did.

The Strines even go so far as to believe that the Federation members won't want to travel to non-Federation planets much more than once in five years, as they did in the past. It may even come about that eventually there would be "Worldcons" without a single representative from the Federation.

This seems to the Strines to work against their understanding of the meaning of a "Worldcon", so they are sending an ambassador to the current "Worldcon" (held on a non-Federation planet) in the hope that they can persuade Federation and non-Federation members that the "Worldcon" ideal is best served by keeping the present system.

Insidiously circulated by Merv Binns, Peter Darling, Leigh Edmonds, John Foyster, Bruce Gillespie, Lee Harding, Robin Johnson, Gary Mason, Bob Smith and Alf van der Poorten: the AUSTRALIA IN '75 Committee, P.O. Box A215, Sydney South, New South Wales 2000, Australia

BEER MUTTERINGS

Recently Brian Aldiss edited an anthology whose American title I forget but whose British title is better anyway: Farewell, Fantastic Venus! It consists of stories, essays, etc. from the past hundred years or so, dealing with our neighbor planet. They give a nostalgic backward look, since between Earth-based astronomy and the Mariner and Venera probes nearly all the ideas in them—not merely our dear old wet jungle full of bare-bottomed princesses, but the assorted hells—have been shown to be flat-out untrue. A couple of my stories are included. I don't mind. Obsolescence is built into science fiction just as it is into science.

Still, being human, writers also make avoidable errors, and sometimes these bring on an anecdote. I propose to discuss a few of mine. This will convince you I'm a very modest fellow, and you won't notice the outrageous bragging elsewhere.

In (The Day) After Doomsday, the payoff involves conversion from one number system to another. My area was having a long hot spell at the time I wrote that novel, the sole excuse I can offer for getting the conversion wrong: When a few readers pointed out the goof, I wailed to Fred Pohl who was then editing GALAXY: "Where was an old mathematician like you when it hit the fan?" Unfortunately, the revelation came too late for amending the text of the American pb edition; it was possible to do so in the Gollancz (British) version, which must therefore be regarded as definitive if you like fancy words.

A worse pratfall of the brain, since I don't recall any unusual weather during the writing, occurred in Guardians of Time (a book that, irrelevantly to the present topic, enjoys a curious popularity in eastern Europe and the USSR though it hardly depicts a Marxist future—maybe that's why?). A Navajo character was described as tall and lean. A lady reader of that people wrote to me: "I almost fell out of the chair I otherwise overflow." The especially odd thing here is that in younger days I spent quite a bit of time in Navajo country. To be sure, that was so far back that a federal law still existed against Indians getting alcoholic beverages. I took huge pleasure in helping them out. However counterrevolutionary, I do feel there are a few classes of law a man is duty bound to break, and anything that smacks

A Column

By **POUL ANDERSON**



of Jim Crow is among them.

Being laid mostly in Denmark, The Corridors of Time attracted some attention there. One reviewer, while praising its general accuracy and granting that the Great Belt is considered international waters, pointed out that tax-free drinks are not sold on the ferries. (I'd never happened to try buying one, and took for granted—) "That," he wrote, "is carrying science fiction too far."

In We Have Fed Our Sea (aka The Enemy Stars) I said that the velocity of gravitational forces is greater than light's. Though no one at the time had measured it, which a chap in Maryland now seems to have done, relativity theory already indicated I was wrong. I should've been bolder and postulated tachyons; but such imaginativeness is reserved for the wild-eyed professional scientists. In the mystery novel Murder In Black Letter, characters refer to marijuana as "pod" with a d. Well, that was the way I heard the term, back in naive 1959. (Like the chap in the classic joke, I tried it once, didn't like it.) The historical novel The Golden Slave—not my title!—prompted L. Sprague de Camp to a marvelous bit of one-upmanship, a postcard from Africa reading: "I enjoyed your book on the way over, but wasn't there some confusion about ship types? See Casson's The Ancient Mariners." From Africa, mind you. Honest, Sprague, we laughed for the rest of the day. And of course you were perfectly right.

F&SF used to have a French edition, FICITION, that was much more than a French edition. I mean it contained a lot of original material too, even footnotes which sometimes rationalized a story item better than the author had done. My prehistoric yarn—i.e. yarn set in a prehistoric era—"The Long Remembering" appeared there, translated by Francois Bordès. If you know anything about contemporary anthropology, you'll know why I felt honored. He threw in a couple of his own footnotes. One simply remarked that, contrary to my impression, Cro-Magnon man doesn't seem to have known the bow and arrow. But the other, referring to my mention of a "long-tooth," said: "While the sabertoothed tiger did still exist in America at this time, it was extinct in Europe. Apparently

long-toothed carnivores always survive later in America.¹¹

Now and then an editor will catch an error before the work goes to press. I cherish Tony Boucher's dictum, when I'd had had a character prepare martinis in a shaker: ¹¹I want those martinis made in a pitcher. I am sure that, upon mature reflection, you will agree with me.¹¹

My favorite correction of all was in the same general field. In Brain Wave, a couple of elderly gentlemen are waiting for It to happen. It may go well or badly; they've done what they can; nothing is left but to wait and see. They break out the best wine in stock, sit down, and talk. I did some oenological research for the scene, but evidently not enough, because a letter came in from France: ¹¹As for that wine, monsieur, ah, no, no, that was a very bad year.¹¹

From time to time I've irritated the hell out of miscellaneous writer types by denying that there is anything special about writing as a vocation, by asserting it's merely one of the many things people do, by admitting that I myself do it mainly for the bucks and if I had my druthers would enlist with Cousteau. The objectors seem to feel this is desecration, prostitution, you name it. They overlook the fact that a job of work can be done with one's whole heart, at the cost of considerable personal wear and tear, even if one doesn't think of himself as being a kind of priest. To take an extreme illustration, look at the average Medal of Honor winner. Life has more in it than writing, and he is a poor writer who does not recognize this. Shakespeare made his pile and retired.

Yet I can't deny that a daimon, or more likely a monkey, sits on the real writer's shoulder. Shakespeare wrote "The Tempest" in Stratford. ("King Henry VIII" is now thought to be spurious.) A famous novelist admitted to me that he might have quit years back as far as money goes, but couldn't help himself. For that matter, to jump from the sublime to etc., why am I perpetrating these words?

Communication? Well, it is a way to talk at you. John D. MacDonald, who is deservedly far more popular than I will ever be, has described the process of writing as "dropping feathers down a well." Which may be for the best. If every reader sent a letter, no time would be left for beer or books or boats or bawds or anything else that really matters. Still, you'd maybe be surprised at how little direct response we people get.

Of course, mainly what a writer who knows his business is out to do is entertain you, and a well-told story needs no comment beyond the plunking down of your money. (We'll even take the debased coinage of the Empire; money of the Republic is hard to come by these days.) If in the course of that entertainment he can slip a message across, okay, especially if it's a message to the upcoming generation. But it has to be slipped, not blatted. There is no reason on Earth or in the starry universe why anyone should pay for a long dull sermon.

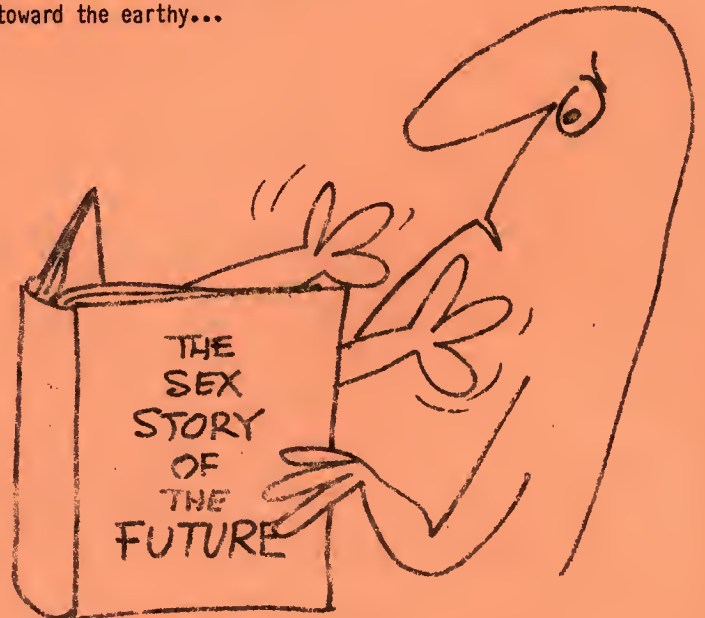
Nevertheless, the writer, being a compulsive communicator—in my case, a surrogate for being a scuba diver among the dolphins—would often like to tell you something in a more direct fashion. The advantage of unpaid publication, as here, is that he/I can go ahead and do so.

Relax. No rant is intended. I merely offer for your consideration, if you feel like considering, a few questions—and if you don't feel like, skip them—:

- 1) Is liberty worth preserving?
- 2) If so, does its last important guardian have the right to maintain external outposts and internal order?
- 3) You knows a better 'ole?
- 4) No matter how strongly you may disagree with their conclusions, has it ever occurred to you that people in that motley camp loosely labelled "conservatives" are there not because of a frantic desire to maintain special privilege, but because of a concern for humanity and the planet perhaps equal to your own?
- 5) Have you ever thought that if only we could get rid of these goddamn labels, we might be able to roll up our sleeves and accomplish something real?

This column seeks to be various enough that in toto, like Tom Lehrer, it will have something to offend everybody. However, I try to live by the old definition of a gentleman as a man who never causes pain unintentionally. Stir you up, provoke you, give your adrenal glands a kick in the arse, yes; but no grave insult except to the very few who have it coming. And certain individuals do find certain words and ideas quite repugnant. I respect their right to their own feelings and, just as I would not offer pork chops to a Jewish or beer to a Mormon guest, so I have hitherto attempted to keep the language in these pages mild.

At the same time, the world does include persons who like pork chops and even, I am told, beer. My own sense of humor tends toward the earthy...



hey, wonder about masy, venusy, lunny...that unforgettable evening when Tony Boucher of beloved memory and I swapped limericks for two or three solid hours.... But to get to the point. Besides fun, some statements, among them statements on fundamental matters, can probably only be made in coarse terms. If you doubt this, go re-read your Shakespeare.

Hence: from now on, whoever is repelled by uninhibited outspokenness (and to repeat, I'm not such a prude-in-reverse as to hold this is any discredit) be warned and do not read past the heading

RABELAISIAN DEPARTMENT

Among my habits is one, shared by many, which got discussion in the Vörpal Glass incarnation of BM. That's spelling words backwards. The results are often amusing, even useful. For instance, when an awkward silence descends on a social gathering, I can invariably break it by saying in a delighted tone, "Do you realize that 'Constantinople' spelled backwards is 'Elponitnatsnoc'? Or great thunderous insights burst upon me. Take Larry Niven's "tunctip"—

Not long ago I reversed the German noun "Reparatur," meaning "repair," and got "rutarapeR," which has to be pronounced Root-A-Raper. Now being what is laughingly known as a homeowner, I have occasional need to call in the Roto-Rooter company to unclog my sewer line. Suddenly it came to me, an outfit could be organized to compete, not by doing the same thing better but by taking an altogether different approach.

Root-A-Raper! Imagine. Roto-Rooter uses a snake with cutting blades at the end, hauled off a wheel: effective, but about as dreary a piece of equipment as you're likely to find this side of Chairman Mao's little red book. Root-A-Raper, in contrast, uses a reciprocating engine. Two large spheres, containing a detergent, are fixed on either side of a hose whose conical metal head has a valve at the tip. A pump fills the hose with water until it extends long, thick, and stiff into the sewer; then the engine thrusts it forward and pulls it back, many times per minute, until the obstacle has been cleared away; at this point, valves open, detergent foams out through the head, and the pipe is thoroughly flushed. Accompanying sounds are obvious. "Chug, chug, chug-chug, chug-chug-chug, chug-chug-chugchugchugchugchugchugCHUGCHUGCHUG—WHOOEE!—chug... chug...ch-u-g...clunk."

Like the machine, the service should be distinctive. Where Roto-Rooter's men are clean, courteous, and efficient, Root-A-Raper's are dirty, unshaven, boorish, quarrelsome, destructive, dishonest, incompetent oafs. Where Roto-Rooter charges reasonably, and makes no charge if it cannot accomplish a job, Root-A-Raper wants exorbitant fees to have somebody slouch around within two or three weeks, trample your flowers, spit on your floor, help himself to your beer and maybe your wife, and bungle things so disastrously that you'll be stuck with a thousand-dollar bill for replacing the whole line.

It can't fail. It's a gold mine. You see, among norm-

ally well-to-do white American families, the proportion of 20th-century liberals is large. (The qualifier distinguishes them from 19th-century liberals, such as I presume Heinlein is, and 18th-century liberals, such as I imagine I am.) These people are profoundly masochistic. They like paying taxes and feeling guilty. All we have to do is tell them Root-A-Raper's employees are socially deprived, and they'll fall all over themselves to engage us. Some will flush cement down their own toilets.

—In fact, this general line of thought is worth exploring further, and therefore I announce a contest. Who knows, it could lead the winner to fame and fortune. But I tell you frankly, the objective is difficult to obtain and may even be impossible.

Write a scenario for a television commercial which will be more stupid, vulgar, saccharine, vicious, or otherwise disgusting than what we see on our screens.

Send your entries, as many as you wish, to me at 3 Las Palomas, Orinda, California 94563. (I never write that as CA. Zip code, all right; but spelling their names is my lonely protest against the reduction of the states to postal districts.) Try to keep them more or less within the law—e.g., I recommend the use of imaginary products, firms, etc., to avoid libel suits—but if you can't resist, I won't fink on you. None will be returned and few are likely to be acknowledged. I am de Judge and no higher court exists for an appeal. The contest closes when I say it does, but will run about three months from the date you read this. First prize will be your choice of (a) any half dozen books of mine, autographed, that you want, foreign-language editions included, provided I have spare copies; or (b) a fifth of Glenlivet, or a check for price of same if it can't be delivered to you personally. I advise choosing (b). Second and third prizes will be awarded at whim, like maybe another book or a drink at the next convention or we can discuss the matter. The best entries will be published here, subject to Dick Geis' veto since he's the man who has to buck the postal authorities.

As an admittedly weak example, I offer the following.

The three figures of The Spirit of '76 appear in the distance and come close, playing Yankee Doodle. They stop and sing to the same tune, with appropriate miming:

Ultra-Seltzer hits the spot
when you are feeling acid.
It makes you belch and fart a lot
until your gut grows placid.

Ultra-Seltzer is the swill
when you're about to vomit.
No more need you take a pill
nor stuff one up your grommet.



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THE EDITOR'S DAY BEGINS WHEN A PECULIAR RHYTHMIC TAPPING noise breaks into his consciousness. He opens his eyes, groans, and sees the bedroom roof is leaking again. It is 7:30 A.M.

He stumbles out of bed, disturbing his cat, who has been sleeping on his feet. Pausing only to shift one of the many buckets under the drips of water, the editor stumbles downstairs to feed the cat.

He then stumbles back upstairs and into the editorial 'office' which is adjacent to the bedroom in the tenement where he lives. He eats a bowl of sugar frosted flakes while reading through the typesetting he did himself yesterday on the IBM 72 composer which has been hired for two weeks.

In the bedroom, his girl is still asleep, oblivious of the leaking roof. Hating her for it, our editor turns on the typesetter and begins his day's work.

When we first met Lauraine De La Rue, he writes, we said 'What's your racket?' 'A Slazenger,' she replied. Yes, Lauraine has been mixed up with rackets all her life — tennis rackets! And if you've ever wondered what those curvaceous cuties on centre court wear under their mini-tennis-dresses, all is now revealed...

This typesetting (needless to say, written off the top of his head) is to accompany some glossy photographs of a girl in a tennis dress with her legs open; this work is for a sex-magazine publisher. The pictures are spread over the floor alongside NEW WORLDS paste-up sheets. Sometimes it gets confusing.

Two hours later, the editor goes downstairs and collects the morning mail. There is an invoice from the printer, for £230; an invoice from the previous, defunct printer for £3000; a solicitor's letter; a court order for payment of rates on the building; a final demand from the phone company. Nothing to worry about.

The phone rings. It is a contributor, asking for money. The editor tells him that if he can come around, the money is waiting for him; but that if he doesn't come around, someone will probably forget to put it in the mail to him.

A loud thumping on the wall. Editor goes into bedroom, finds girl saying the roof is leaking in a new place. Editor fixes up a new piece of string to guide the drips into a bucket. There are now 5 lengths of string leading into the bucket. Drips are running down all of them.

Editor goes back into office, just in time to see that the Portobello Road garbage collectors are approaching. He runs down to the kitchen, lifts the garbage can, takes it downstairs and out of the front door, leaving it on the sidewalk.

Editor completes typesetting to go with sexy photos. Well, that should pay the rental on the IBM machine. He

GOOD MORNING



now switches to NEW WORLDS work. Typesetting the stories himself means that he doesn't have to mark them up for press. He reminds himself of this great saving in time as he plods through a 6,000 word manuscript, pausing to type the justification coding at the end of each line.

Editor's girl has meanwhile struggled out of bed, and is getting to work in the room below the office, where all the subscription and advertising work is done.

Two artists come around carrying totally useless folios of work. Editor gives them his designer's address and phone number.

Lunch time. Editor goes to eat at a cafe conveniently situated two doors away. It is greasy, smelly, revolting. But, it is convenient. While he is eating, a tramp comes and sits down opposite and asks the editor if he can spare a couple of his roast potatoes. Editor tells tramp to piss off.

Editor reads a recent issue of FANTASTIC magazine, where Ted White describes An Editor's Day. Editor almost chokes on his food, he is laughing so much.

On his way back into his house editor finds a van pulling up outside. It is packed with returned, unsold copies of previous issues of NEW WORLDS. Editor helps van driver stack the bundles in the hall, under the elevated guest-bed, behind the motorcycles and on top of the spare rolls of carpeting. The piles of unsold NEW WORLDS now reach eight feet high. There is a tiny space about eighteen inches wide between the tottering stacks, for people to gain entrance to the house. Ah well.

Editor goes upstairs, sits down at his design-work table, clears the NEW WORLDS design aside and finishes the artwork for a book jacket titled Learning To Live With Your Library. He goes downstairs again, wheels his 50cc moped into the street,

an editor's day

By Charles Platt

fifteen minutes getting it started, then roars off in a cloud of oil fumes to deliver the artwork to the book publisher.

After that, he goes into London to buy instant lettering materials for the NEW WORLDS design.

Back home again. Phone rings. It is his girl calling from downstairs to ask what the time is. He tells her.

The lavatory is overflowing again. He kicks it.

The typesetter is acting up. He kicks that as well.

He puts on some new music.

Phone rings. His girl downstairs doesn't like the new music, as it is relayed to her over an extension.

Doorbell rings. Editor leans out of window. It is someone he doesn't want to see, so he doesn't answer. He notes with satisfaction, however, that it is raining and the unwanted visitor is receiving painful 240 volt electric shocks from the home-rigged doorbell.

Phone rings. Editor's girl asks if he'll take the subscription copies of this month's issue round to the post office. Editor agrees. He goes to a friend's house four doors away and borrows a baby carriage, then uses it to wheel the 500-odd subscription copies in their envelopes the half mile or so to the post office.

By this time it is dark and the cafe seems to have closed early. Editor curses and buys baked beans, cheese and sardines. He takes them up to his room and eats out of the cans while proof-reading the typesetting he has done.

Designer arrives, having been working during the day at his job in a laboratory. Editor goes on typesetting. Designer starts work, discovers editor accidentally threw away an essential piece of paper on which all the contents of the issue are listed. They spend half an hour looking for it, finally find it lying under the baked beans' can.

Designer points out that half the stories are typeset but not illustrated, while the other half are illustrated but not typeset. How can he paste any of them up? Editor suggests the designer do an illustration himself. Designer agrees and starts drawing a picture.

Next door neighbor calls in and asks when the typesetting machine will be available, so he can typeset his magazine. Editor tells him to come back at about 2 A.M.

Designer points out that there are 35 pages of material, to be fitted into a 32 page magazine. Editor refuses to think about it.

Designer goes home. Editor feeds cat, typesets the contents page, then starts designing the cover, which he usually does himself. Eventually he decides the cover photograph is not going to work out. He puts on his coat and takes it round to a friend eight blocks away, who is a photographer in such desperate need of money that he values NEW WORLDS' meagre payments and is willing to work at odd hours. Editor and photographer work on the print till about

1 A.M. Editor heads for home on his moped.

He is stopped in Portobello Road because he is riding barefoot without any lights on his motorcycle. He has to invite the police into his house before they become friendly; even then, they start suggesting he is perhaps producing a 'dubious' magazine.

Girl gets home from babysitting for a friend. "When are you coming to bed?" she asks. "Never," editor replies.

Neighbor arrives to use typesetting machine. Only then does editor discover they have run out of carbon ribbons.

That ends that.

He finishes the NEW WORLDS cover design, finally gets to bed about 4.

But it is hard to fall asleep, in view of the fact that the roof is still leaking....



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VECTOR Now film set lithographed. 50¢ per issue. 28 Bedfordbury, London, WC2, England. Editorial address: Bob Parkinson, 106 Ingram Av., Aylesbury, Bucks, England. In the next issue: BLISH on Fantasy, BRUNNER on money, BRADBURY REVISITED by Willis McNelly.

ANXIOUS TO FIND old anthology possibly edited by Conklin or Elwood. Title may be Adventures in Time and Dimension. Only stories I recall: 1) Man enters 'our' timeline from one in which Nazi Germany had won WW2; 2) where a man discovers the aging process (rusting, dust settling, etc.) is caused by a race of dwarves. CAN ANYONE HELP? Dennis Kincaid, 8100 S.W. 97 St., Miami, Fla. 33156.

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FOCAL POINT



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•• BOOK REVIEWS ••

THE PROMETHEUS PROJECT by Gerald Feinberg—Doubleday, \$4.95, Doubleday Anchor Book, \$1.45.

Reviewed by Philip Jose Farmer

"This book is intended, quite literally, to change the world," the dust jacket blurb says. Indeed it is, and in a constructive sense, which is pleasant news. Many books are intended to change the world but not always for a goal of which men of good will can approve.

The author, a young man with a Ph.D. in physics, is concerned about man's long-range goals, of which, so far, man has none, barring the religious. Dr. Feinberg fears that certain decisions about the use of certain scientific devices will automatically eliminate other decisions and devices. Once a road is taken, it may be impossible to retrace your steps and take another road. Thus, the decision to use atomic energy was made without any consideration for anything other than an immediate goal.

Dr. Feinberg believes that mankind should ask, first, what kind of questions mankind should ask. Then mankind should look for the answers. And the question-asking and decision-making should not be left up to the state governments. They should be done on as democratic a basis as possible, since everybody will be affected for generations to come.

For instance, what directions should molecular engineering take? How much changing of man's genes will be permitted? If mankind transforms himself through biological manipulations, he will produce a man with a different set of interests and potentialities. And, once having started down one biological highway, he may regret having taken that irreversible route.

Dr. Feinberg suggests many long-range goals in many fields: biological, economic, social, psychological, astronautic, and religio-philosophical. He describes the dangers and the attractions and benefits of personal immortality, one goal that almost everyone will want to study.

Feinberg goes through the many problems of long-range goals very methodically and coolly, yet he gives the impression of being, at the same time, very concerned. He believes that mankind doesn't have the time now to wait for some gifted individual to appear and formulate goals for mankind.

Moses, Jesus, Mahmet, Gautama, and others have done this in the past. But their goals, and their systems to attain these, were irrational and are irrelevant for these times (as I interpret his comments). Now is the time—past time, perhaps—for the Prometheus (that is, Forethought) Project. And all of man should take part in the process of formulating the goals.

Very good. Very stimulating. The book rings true, and I recommend it. I hope that enough people get interested in this book to form Prometheus Project groups and initiate Feinberg's proposals.

But it took me a long time to finish the book. The style is fairly easy and clear, and the ideas are stimulating, as I said. But when I began to read, I came across a passage which threw me. And it stopped me for considerable stretches of time whenever I started the book again.

On page 23 of the hardcover edition I read: "My own concern with more remote problems is based on an optimistic estimate that most of our immediate problems will be solved in a relatively short time by the march of technology and the worldwide spread of those aspects of Western culture responsible for our high living standards... Since I regard such problems as relatively short term, I will not deal with them in any detail here." (Italics are mine.)

Is a man who believes this far too naive and idealistic to be taken seriously? Does his blindness, or ignoring, of current problems discredit what he has to say about our long-range goals and their attainability? If we don't solve the problems of overpopulation, war, urban decay, civil rights, and pollution (and especially pollution) we won't be here to ponder long-range goals.

Dr. Feinberg's attitude towards present problems put me off again and again. But I finally forced myself to break through the blindness barrier. And I found a book that I recommend and commend. Science-fiction fans should like it, since Dr. Feinberg refers to a number of s-f books, and the Prometheus Project sounds as if it could be the basic idea of a book by Dr. Asimov or Piers Anthony.

But we had better start a project to have our world (not just our nation) cleaned up very soon. Otherwise, Prometheus will die, not from a vulture's beak but by strangulation in garbage solid, liquid, and gaseous.





EARTHMAN'S
BURDEN

by Poul Anderson
& Gordon R. Dickson
—Avon Camelot ZS166
60¢

Reviewed by Fred Patten

"At last in paperback!" the cover says, and this is an admirable expression of sentiment. The Hoka stories were practically the last examples of pure humor we've had in sf on a regular basis, and it was a sad day when Anderson and Dickson decided they'd run out of new situations into which to put their furry wonders.

For those of you unfamiliar with the stories, the Hokas are a race of teddy-bear-like aliens on the planet Yoka, technologically backward but with an emotional love for anything Terran that exceeds an 8-year-old's devotion to Batman. As a 'protected' race, the Hokas are not allowed access to any advanced mechanics, but the United Commonwealth's Cultural Development Service never could see anything wrong with allowing the importation of outdated Earth fiction. The result is the enthusiastic remodeling of Yoka into a Hokan Wild West, a Hokan Spanish Main, a Hokan Sahara Desert (complete with Lost Patrol and Fort Zinderneuf), and much, much more.

All of this is the personal headache of the Terran Plenipotentiary, Alex Jones, who is given the Earthman's Burden of bringing civilization and social dignity to the Hokas so they can be elevated to full independence in the Interbeing League. The Hokas have their own ideas about civilization, and cheerfully insist upon drafting Alex to be Greenbeard the Pirate, Dr. Watson, Tarzan, or whoever else is needed to fill the needs of the particular locality he happens to be in at the moment. And then there were the Hokas who got hold of Alex's diplomatic spaceskiff and went blasting off into the galaxy to play Space Patrol...

This book contains the first six stories in the series,

plus much well-written connecting material so that it can be read either as a novel or as a collection of short stories, depending upon how much of the Hokas you can take at one sitting.

Three further adventures, describing the Hokan adoption of baseball, secret agentism, and the Jungle Book, were written before Anderson and Dickson ran out of steam, and it's to be hoped that they'll someday finish another three or four stories to allow the publication of a second volume of Hoka stories. Avon has published this as one of their 'Camelot Books', which is their line of paperbacks for juveniles. I suppose this is good, because it encouraged them to reprint most of the Ed Cartier illustrations from the hardbound edition as well. On the other hand, Camelot's atrocious cover format has practically ruined what could've been a delightful Bode-Gogos cover.

In any case, the book shouldn't be missed by anyone. If you read the hardcover 13 years ago, now you can add it to your collection in an edition that won't fall apart as readily as Marty Greenberg's cheap-papered hardcover.



LORD TYGER by Philip Jose Farmer—Doubleday, \$5.95
ALMURIC by Robert E. Howard—Ace O1750, 60¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

Most books written for kids are failures. The adult mind cannot appreciate the fertile imagination or the monumental humility of children. Adults, like Philip Jose Farmer, are esthetically sophisticated; their imaginations whipped into line; their intellects self-admiring. Unlike kids, they cannot appreciate the story for the story's sake alone. They cannot accept the thrills-and-spills, gore galore, scared-shitlessness of it all without a dose of "social significance." Kids can and do because kids are capable of genuine escapism. Consequently, when an adult writes a book for kids, he usually misses them entirely (though he will take home a hoard of medallions from adoring librarians). Conversely, when an adult attempts to duplicate a "juvenile" that he loved in his childhood, his book usually fails for the same reason.

Philip Jose Farmer has attempted, and failed, to write an "adult" Tarzan novel.

His Ras Tyger is not bad. He is cool and amusing. His adventures are colorful and exciting. His jungle is credible. There is even a healthy dose of blunt pornography. But the book is about Farmer, not Tarzan. It is about Farmer's skill and wit and boldness, not about the good guys vs. the bad guys. And it is entertaining, but little else.

On the other hand, Robert E. Howard was one of the best juvenile writers of all time. His narrative is accurately structured to the juvenile mind. His character, description, and pace strike precisely to liberate young imaginations. It is no wonder adults of today return to him with such devotion. He must have provided them with unforgettable nightmares.

And that is the secret of Howard's success. He was writ-

ing the literature of childhood nightmares. Dark things that lurk beyond the fire. Massive, hairy things that crawl and bite and scratch. Sinister somethings staring at you from the blackness, waiting. And, too, the strength—huge, bulging muscles, capable of smashing skulls like eggshells. Epic courage which drives a superhuman to take on dozens on neanderthals.

Kids, in their helplessness, in their ignorance, possessed by a physical vitality, and unfettered brain, which they have little control of, must see truth in Howard's fantasy ogres, and hope in his supermen. They must see themselves rising from under the covers to take on the shadows by the bureau and the branch against the window, and vanquish them into a hellish abyss.

I feel terribly cheated that I did not discover the Howard books years ago. They are above me now, and as conscientiously as I tried to enjoy this one, I could not. But if you were more fortunate than me; enjoy! enjoy!



SPOCK MUST DIE by James Blish—Bantam H5515, 60¢
Reviewed by Wayne Connelly

If one Spock is good, then it is only logical that two Spocks will be twice as good—this seems to be the basic premise of James Blish's new STAR TREK novel. And the pity is, it might well have been true.

The notion of resurrecting the defunct TV series' format and characters as a novel is one that I am in sympathy with. In spite of its faults I sometimes enjoyed the show, and like myriads of others, I too 'groked Spock.' So, I picked up the book with excitement—I was looking forward to reading some real STAR TREK science fiction, not the diluted space-western of the TV series; moreover, the blurb promised me twice as much Spock. I was disappointed.

With a war against the Klingon Empire as a backdrop, an experiment is attempted with the Transporter which backfires, producing two Mr. Spocks, one a mirror image. But which one? Both claim to be the real Spock, both share his superhuman physical, psychic, and intellectual abilities; but one is a satanic double, genuinely deserving of his pointed ears. So far, so good; but unfortunately that's as far as Mister Blish goes.

The rest of the novel resembles the TV series in its superficiality and glibness. The story seems to pale into a sub-stratum for the superscience and 'special effects'—not a new or necessarily bad thing, but Hell! it shouldn't be so blatantly obvious.

The Spock quandary with its promise of new insights and brilliant confrontations is most unsatisfactorily resolved at about the two-thirds point by a piece of gimmickery (a foul blow, Mr. Blish, most foul). So, instead of a Spock novel we get an overly-long TV script, loyal to the point of absurdity with its many asterisked references to earlier shows and perpetuating its worst faults.

(I admire the idea, Mister Blish; the STAR TREK concept and characters deserve rescuing. But, with all respect—YOU BOTCHED IT.)



MAGELLAN by Colin Anderson—Walker, \$4.95
Reviewed by Paul Walker

If you were to make people happy, they would lose all respect for themselves. Without a weekly fit of depression, they would feel their lives had become meaningless. In fact, if most people were not completely miserable, they would have no personalities at all. It is for this reason I urgently recommend Colin Anderson's Magellan. It is guaranteed to depress you into discovering new depths.

Anderson goes for the crotch of the prospect of happiness. It is the far future. The world has been destroyed by war. A single city-state (Magellan) remains. It is a Utopia; phony, of course. The hero, Euri (Euripides Che Fourthjuly 1070121; a joyless label if ever there was one!) finds release in killing people, while eluding the Servants who make everybody happy with tranquilizers (the fiends!). It is the eve of Eternity. At midnight the computer, Chronophage, will take dominion over the Earth and render each man a god, granting any wish he cares to make. Paradise in enow. And Euri gets the heaven kicked out of him.

Yes sir, folks, things can be worse, Mr. Anderson assures us. We might have to endure Paradise. The horror of that experience is unprintable. In fact, I found it unreadable.

Regardless, this book is required reading to all serious SFers. Its depth of characterization and use of mood is extraordinary. Its ruthless pessimism and articulate contempt for human values give it a brutal honesty. It is significant, almost brilliant, and should be influential as a purgative, liberating more optimistic themes to exploitation. But strictly for the serious reader.



DUNE MESSIAH by Frank Herbert—Putnam, \$4.95; Berkley N1847 95¢
Reviewed by Richard Delap

Readers seem to have fallen into two distinct groups concerning Dune: they either loved it or were bored by it. With its exhaustive ecological and socio-structural detail, it's really a wonder and a joy that Herbert could keep his plot in continual motion, avoiding the rest stops that so commonly mar lengthy novels when the author carelessly inserts background detail helter-skelter. Now, Dune Messiah, picking up a decade or so after the first novel ends, inexplicably makes almost every mistake avoided earlier.

Paul Atreides, emperor of Dune (Arrakis), has built an empire that spans the stars, while a group of follower-believers worship him for his Messianic psi-powers which include an ability to specifically foresee the possibilities of various futures. But Time, that great destroyer of cultures, has fostered a plot to overthrow the leader—a plot initiated by the Bene Gesserit, a religious sisterhood that developed the genetic techniques which originally brought the strangely talented Paul into existence.

Paul, meanwhile, finds his personal difficulties blending indistinguishably with the political ones. In a convenient marriage lacking both love and consummation, his wife, the Princess Irulan, is a weak but handy tool of the Bene Gesserit; the visiting Spacing Guild Steersman, Etric, uses his own special talent to cloud Paul's vision so that the plot against him will not be detected; Alia, Paul's sister, born with the complete knowledge which her mother possessed, feels a strange attraction to Hayt, a "ghola" recreation of Paul's dead friend, Duncan Idaho; and Chani, Paul's mistress, who the emperor hopes will someday bear his child despite her seeming sterility.

There are many lesser characters woven into the proceedings, the majority of who do little more than burden the already confusing plot with minor ambiguities.

The most distressing thing about the novel is the fact that Herbert seems to have settled for an inconsequential espionage tone around which to reweave his fascinating world, less fascinating this time since the author clearly presupposes reader familiarity. Those who read Dune and remember it well will be less puzzled than those who haven't, but this familiarity only emphasizes the banality of the present book. Herbert also throws in some overt parallels that are decidedly unconvincing and needless.

But if the plot seems unclear, the characters are ciphers of the most annoying sort. Much time is spent delineating both Paul and Alia, yet both are completely lifeless, playing at emotions that have no emotional content. Paul does not always stay in character for his thoughts fluctuate between wise and frivolous decisions with no real understand-

ing offered for the reasons this is so. Herbert is merely looking for ways to fill the page, often excusing himself with less than satisfactory explanations: "He [Paul] could not say he had acted at any point in his life for one specific reason. The motives and impinging forces had been complex..." (p.165). When all else fails, Paul and several others can be depended on to philosophize with barreling cliches, while several of the plot-molding characters/situations appear like dime-store magic. And, the book is simply not consistent. Almost everyone cries—in spite of rigorous training to preserve water on this desert world—to show true emotion. Once for effect, I can accept, but the repetition eventually breeds boredom and, finally, contempt.

As Hayt/Idaho cries when he realizes he's being used, "I've been rigged with a compulsion!", so will the reader soon realize that he's been likewise rigged by the success of the first book. There's no reason for Herbert to write a book like this; his capabilities are far beyond it, so there's no reason for anyone to read it either.



ONE BEFORE BEDTIME by Richard Linkroom—
Pocket Books 75371, 75¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

The greatest cliché in our complex age is the intellectuals' insistence that ours is a complex age. Be they writer or scholar, ward healer or radical, the liberal arts

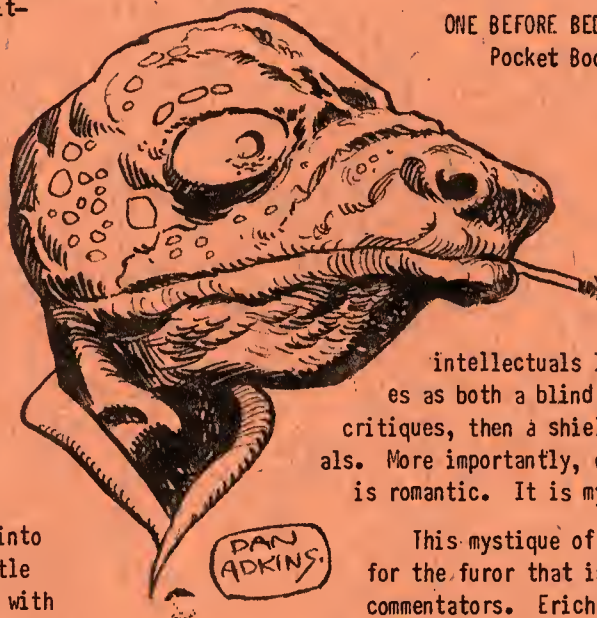
intellectuals love complexity, for it serves as both a blind from which to fire nebulous critiques, then a shield to cover nebulous withdrawals. More importantly, complexity is challenging. It is romantic. It is mysterious.

This mystique of complexity is the furnace for the furor that is generated at "common sense" commentators. Erich Hoffer, Al Capp, William F. Buckley, Jr., to name a few. The age points some

to the left some to the right. Dick Gregory began "a common sencer". Mark Twain is famous for its beatification. It is the ability to reduce the nebulous to the lucid. The translation of the dialect of the queasy gut into declarative sentences. Nothing is more sadistic to the liberal arts majors, even if they are illiterate fascists!

Richard Linkroom is a common sencer. He is a respectable talent, with a warm sense of humor, a fondness for people, and the old-fashioned desire to believe that the worst of people are basically good. You may assume I have just described a loser—NOT SO.

With the shrewd eye of Sartre, he has forseen all right-and-left complaints and paid them a nod. One Before Bedtime is the story of a Vietnam Veteran in search of a self, who finds it through an accident which turns him black. It is



told from four points of view. The largest stockholder being the "brother", a simple-minded, simple-hearted midwesterner who inadvertently becomes a civil rights protester in an effort to save his sister, a college radical type, from a race riot. Sister loves Veteran, even more after he turns black. The Veteran wants out—of his past, his present, and especially being black. He quickly runs afoul of the law, becomes a militant hero, and winds up the leader of a black revolution. Brother observes it all while pursuing his seduction of a racist girlfriend. All parties become hopelessly involved and end up where they least expected.

The book is almost farce. Its seriousness is marred by sentiment, which Linkrum makes a herculean effort to bury. It is fast-reading. It is feather-light sociology. It is warm comedy. As art, it is professional. In short, an enjoyable tidbit.

What saves it from trivia is that Linkrum is right. Racist or liberal, conservative or militant, we are all victims of our beliefs. Be they concentration camps or poverty programs, a quiet life or revolution, our sure-fire solutions to social problems are intended to solve our emotional problems, first. People are so sure they believe what they think they do but, confronted with their beliefs, they may shed them without hesitation, for acts that express knowledge of concern and compassion.

Linkrum is not excusing anyone nor is he telling honky lies. He may be accused of sentimentality, but it is honest sentiment. And the strain of truth that runs throughout the book redeems even this venial sin. This book is worth keeping around for something to read on a rainy day.



THE SORCERER'S SKULL by David Mason—Lancer, 75¢
KAVIN'S WORLD by David Mason—Lancer, 75¢

Reviewed by Earl Evers

These are sword & sorcery fantasies by an author who really knows something about magic, and who handles it with the same logic and detail as a good straight SF writer handles superscience.

Skull is a retelling of the Vampire legend that's considerably more than a rehash of Bram Stoker—it utilizes and develops elements from the "living dead" folklore of several cultures, including the Hindu and West African Vampire concepts as well as the more familiar Eastern European one.

Kavin creates a Heroic Fantasy hero who is both a wizard/warrior figure and a plausible human being, and who moves against a background world drawn from a variety of legends and historical cultures.

The over-all tone and feel of both books is that of an Alfred Duggan or Robert Graves historical novel, and that's high praise. Physical action is realistic rather than exaggerated, with the sorcery rather than the swordplay providing the color and imaginative element. (And it's not just the usual European school of the Art, either, but a blend of Celtic and Gypsy magic with minor elements from many sources. I spotted Egyptian magic, and American Indian magic, and Polynesian magic, and there were others I couldn't identify.) The characters are not deep psychological studies, but they're not Robert E. Howard stick-figures either, and the writing is plain and tight with a dash of humor, rather like C.S. Forester. Pacing is even and fast, but there's not much suspense—you tend not to stop and wonder what's going to happen next, but rather to just read along and enjoy yourself.

These are not "great" or "classic" fantasy, mostly because they're short and simple and intended mainly as entertainment. If you're the analytical type of fantasy fan, these are worth your while—you can have all sorts of fun figuring out the author's sources for the various magical and cultural elements. If you like adventure SF, you'll probably also like these, because the magic is handled throughout as a technical concept, a force to be manipulated. But mostly, they're just fun to read, and I think they deserve more attention than they've gotten so far—they've been selling fairly well, but fans and reviewers have virtually ignored them. I don't know about the rest of you, but I'd rather give some recognition to "light", unpretentious SF and Fantasy that's well-done and interesting than I would to more "serious" works that attempt to explore the Fundamental Mysteries of the Cosmos and don't quite come off.



TOLKIEN: A LOOK BEHIND THE LORD OF THE RINGS by Lin Carter—Ballantine 01550, 95¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

A few months after I started reading science-fiction, I discovered something almost as interesting. A friend of mine, who noticed the books I carted home from the library, said his mother read "that stuff." I was incredulous. At thirteen, my knowledge of maternal literary tastes included GOOD HOUSEKEEPING, BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS, the DAILY NEWS and dog-eared copies of Peton Place, handed from mother to mother across whole continents (always with a pledge to return it for re-reading.) That a professional mother read my cherished SF was an awesome thought.

My friend took me home and said to wait outside. He would bring me a few of her old magazines. He did. In fact, he brought me a grocery bag full!

It was the beginning of a long friendship.

This unique (to my experience) female worked books of crossword puzzles at a sitting, raised three voracious kids, and was never less than arm's reach of a book. Her taste was impeccable.

The following summer, I wandered in as usual one evening with some books to swap. She offered me three hardcovers her sister, a librarian, had brought her. They were LOTR.

I am still amazed how I ever got through the first volume. It gave me trouble not long ago. But the second two went in no time. I called everyone I knew and wrote the rest about this fantastic new book.

The reaction was unanimous, though expressed in a variety of ways: "Elves? Elves? Did you say 'Elves'?" or "Three...volumes?" or "Yes, Paul, that sounds very interesting. Sure, of course, on my word, I'll read it first chance I get. Did you say, 'Elves'?"

Well, I was vindicated magnificently. And so were thousands of other kids and "inside" adults. I suppose that is what endears LOTR to its fans. We have been shilling for SF for so long and receiving nothing but ridicule. Now, we have an "I TOLD YOU SO!" to fling in the faces of the infidels!

And what an "I Told You so!" it is, eh?

I know people who have read it twice who never read more than one book a year. And they swear to me they will read it again.

It is in this spirit that Lin Carter writes in Tolkien: A Look Behind the Lord of the Rings. It is strictly for us pioneers to gloat over.

As usual, Mr. Carter's erudition is in abundance. Unfortunately, he spends too much time on the book and the tradition and not enough on Tolkien himself. The glimpses of him that Carter gives make him a fascinating individual:

From a letter by C.S. Lewis: "...No one ever influenced Tolkien—you might as well try to influence a bandersnatch. We listened to his work, but could affect it only by encouragement. He has only two reactions to criticism: either he begins the whole work over again from the beginning or else takes no notice at all!"

Tolkien himself: "Well, that's quite wrong. _____ had no influence on me at all. I didn't even know him very well. I'll tell you one thing on that point, one of the things I remember Lewis saying to me—of course, Lewis was very influenced as you may know—was, 'Confound you, nobody can influence you anyhow. I have tried but it's no good.'"

There are too few of these quotes in

Carter's book. But it is light, unpretentious, and very readable. It provides a good introduction to Tolkien study and the fantasy tradition.

However, I would strongly recommend you do not give this to anyone who has not read Tolkien. Like all secondary sources, and this is not a better one, it will give the wrong impression. LOTR is there to be discovered by generations. It is best given anonymously, slipped under the door at midnight, signed "The Phantom."



THE GENERAL ZAPPED AN ANGEL by Howard Fast—William Morrow & Co., \$4.95
Reviewed by Richard Delap

Mr. Fast's second collection of science-fiction and fantasy is not a collection of magazine stories as was The Edge of Tomorrow but consists of nine new items getting first exposure here. Two or three are of more than momentary interest, but the book is greatly below even the minimum standards set by most magazines. I take it that the author's enviable mainstream reputation (for such items as Spartacus, The Winston Affair, etc.) is the influence behind hardcover publication of such a trivial collection.

However, when Fast writes well he can be loads of fun. General Mackenzie, in "The General Zapped an Angel," is one of those highly respected warmongers so necessary (!) to our national security, one who has the misfortune to zap an angel down from the sky over Vietnam. The story is high with genuine humor, an amusing modern version of the ever popular fable.

"The Mouse" is an unsettling fantasy about alien visitors to Earth who change a mouse into a conscious intelligence. It begins like a novice's amateurish attempt at sf, yet it soon becomes apparent that Fast is not all that simple-minded and the story has a lovely ending blended of horror and pathos.

The unceasing tastelessness of "The Vision of Milty Boil"

YOU'D LIKE IT DOWN HERE



is quite deliberate I'm sure, and the story is a very nasty item about a man whose vision is always looking up (from a height of 5'11") and whose rise to power is the American Dream carried away on an unsavory tangent.

When an Indian camps on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral for no other reason than to simply 'meditate,' he stirs a brief flurry of public interest but has a more lasting effect on the much-harried priest. "The Mohawk" is short enough to be reasonably effective.

The rest of the stories, unfortunately, are a distressingly rapid downhill run. "The Wound" has an atom bomb used to (hopefully) bring deeply buried oil to the surface, but the story is nothing but surface with a lethargic rendering and a dreadful denouement.

It's difficult to bring a fresh twist to the Deal-with-the-Devil theme, and in "Tomorrow's WALL STREET JOURNAL" Fast doesn't even try very hard. The catch here is that the lead character is easily persuaded to evil, but he's such a shallow man that the reader will likely care not a whit.

"The Interval" isn't a very novel handling of the world as a stage set which is due for a change. The fantasy is clumsy and heavy-handed, the plotting is simply weary.

"The Movie House" brings symbolism to a common denominator of simplicity that should confuse no one in this story of a civilization that lives and works inside a film theatre and the one man who finds a way out. It's very dull, but not quite as boring as "The Insects," which is reminiscent of du Maurier's story about birds but even less explicit as to the reason for the sudden revolt.

Even in paperback this collection would be quite a gyp; at \$4.95, it's almost thievery.



ROGUE STAR by Frederik Pohl and Jack Williamson—Ballantine 01797, 75¢

TIMES WITHOUT NUMBER by John Brunner—Ace 81270, 60¢

STARSHIP by Brian Aldiss—Avon V2321, 75¢

DARK PIPER by Andre Norton—Ace 13795, 60¢

NOMADS OF GOR by John Norman—Ballantine 01765, 75¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

It is the mark of a true professional to make an entertaining success of his flops. The five books reviewed here, with the possible exception of Aldiss', are flops to one degree or another.

Pohl and Williamson's Rogue Star reads like something they knocked off one night in a spirit of camaraderie. I imagine them sitting back to back, each typing his own novel on a previously agreed theme. When finished, the chanted: "One, two, three!" and threw the pages into the air. What they picked up from the floor became the novel. Unfortunately, Williamson seems to have won the toss, for it is his colorful imagination that saves the book.

The true hero, and most interesting protagonist, is

the Rogue Star, himself. Everyone and everything else has no purpose. The story is simply King Kong and Fay Wray. But there is so much color, so many interesting gimmicks, even moments of suspense, that I enjoyed myself. Yet, if I were to recommend this to someone, I would recommend it most for the cover by Paul Lehr, an interesting composition in green and brown.

Less enjoyable, but more successful, is John Brunner's Times Without Number. Here is a truly impressive work of exploitation. Published separately in SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, then immediately in an Ace Double in 1962, it is back again expanded and revised. And the most impressive thing about that is—it is one of the least interesting things Brunner has done. The setting is so absurd it may be enough to turn you against it, so I won't tell you because it does not really matter. The truth is that Brunner's narrative ability is magnificent. It is so competent even his heavy padding is worthwhile. His characters are shallow. His ideas slight. His prose is undistinguished. But Brunner overcomes everything, hooks you completely, and sweeps you to a genuinely satisfying conclusion.

Honestly, I am not a Brunner fan. I could pose a hundred arguments against him. Yet I cannot name a single novel or short story of his that I really disliked or found boring anywhere!

I could cite many instances of both boredom and dissatisfaction with Brian Aldiss, but his Starship is mildly interesting. The trouble with it seems to be that Aldiss lets us know his primitive world is a starship too soon. (I got claustrophobia following his hero.)

Published in 1958, the idea of the starship world may have been fresh and exciting, but in 1970 it is tired. Aldiss' prose is intelligent and literate. His characters are nicely drawn. But there is nothing compelling about his story. Nor is there anything involving about it. The pace is okay. The suspense occasional. The plot too involved. I suppose the truth is there is just nothing here to give a damn about.

There is a lot to give a damn about in Andre Norton's Dark Piper. There is so little to the story it would be criminal to give anything away. And the story is not the book's strong point. It is an adventure. A handful of youngsters wandering about an alien terrain, trying to stay alive and learn what has happened to their parents.

Miss Norton's book is a honey. The prose is a little stiff. The beginning slow. Too much detail. And the ending is inexplicably inconclusive as if there were more volumes to come. Yet it is impossible to put the book down.

Miss Norton's world is real enough to taste. Her characters become your companions, and their adventures are so plausible you feel they are happening to you. But beyond her virtues, there is something basically likeable about Miss Norton and her book. But you find that out for yourself.

John Norman's Nomads of Gor, the fourth volume in the Chronicles of Counter-Earth, is another matter. It is so bad. So incredibly bad! I feel unable to criticize it. But I do not think it fair to quote the man lest his own shock of recog-

Both pieces of fiction, in addition to sharing a common style and a starting-small-but-rapidly-snowballing construction, embrace a pessimism and cynicism of outlook and attitude that is generally identified with certain schools of mainstream literature and political philosophy (both stories, as a matter of fact, end with civilization destroying itself in the inferno of nuclear holocaust). It is only with regret that the reviewer can observe that Sherrred's cynical pessimism, reasonable enough two decades ago, appears even more justified in these times.

For the first couple of chapters, Alien Island threatens to be an empty, cliché-ridden first contact story reminiscent of a 1950's Hollywood farce. A space vehicle that resembles a flying beerkeg lands near a Detroit bar, one of whose patrons, an amiable lush named Ken Jordan, strolls into the spaceship and is whisked away. Shortly thereafter, he begins broadcasting from space and Earth learns that this individual has been selected by the aliens as their sole representative in all dealings with Terran nations. Up to this point, we have what appears to be the plot of one of PLAYBOY's lighter excursions into SF—an impression bolstered by the fact that the central character of the novel is an undercover CIA operative assigned to investigate the spaceship landing and, ultimately, to spy on Ken Jordan.

Sherrred, however, has some surprises in store, including one very neat one about the CIA agent. I don't want to tip off too much of what occurs in Alien Island. Suffice it to say that the novel develops and grows in scope and depth, eventually involving geopolitics, international monetary balance, patriotism, sex mores, racism, and much else. At the conclusion of the novel, a fire of undetermined origin devastates the East Side of Detroit and leads, in a perfectly logical cause-and-effect chain of events, to the end of human civilization on Earth. As with "E for Effort", I'm not quite certain at what point the story stops being a Hollywood farce or a light excursion; Sherrred sort of sneaks up on you. The effect, however, is memorable.

There is nothing exceptional about Alien Island other than that peculiarly powerful construction. Sherrred is a highly competent writer of unspectacular prose; his characterization is average; the novel does not bubble with the ideas it might have had in the hands of a Dick or a Brunner or a Blish. Nevertheless, Alien Island is a well-done and impressive novel. Read it, by all means.

REPORT ON PROBABILITY A by Brian Aldiss—Doubleday, \$4.50
Reviewed by Paul Walker

Part One...Chapter 1...first page...first paragraph...
The Report begins: "One afternoon early in a certain January, the weather showed a lack of character. There was no frost or wind; the trees in the garden did not stir. There was no rain, although anybody accustomed to predicting rain might have forecast it with a fair expectation of being right before nightfall. Cloud lay thickly over the sky. The face of the sun

dition at his complete lack of ability drives him to suicide.

Believe me—it would be impossible to describe how truly awful this book is. You must read the first two chapters. I guarantee that they are worth the price of the book and that you will carry the book from friend to friend from con to con to show it to unbelievers.

What I like about SF is the level of its mediocrity. There is a benevolence about it. A dignity and respect in most cases. Sure, there are a lot of great SF novels and stories, but there are a lot of better mainstream ones... yet on the level of mediocrity, the mainstream cannot compete.

As so-so as these five books are, I would feel that at least four of them do as much of a service to their creators as do their finest books.



ALIEN ISLAND by T.L. Sherrred—Ballantine 01815, 75¢
Reviewed by Ted Pauls

More than twenty years ago, T.L. Sherrred wrote a novella for ASTOUNDING entitled "E for Effort" which made such a deep impression on me that for more than a decade after discovering it in 1955 I kept it on my personal list of the ten best SF stories I'd ever read.

With the general rise in quality of speculative literature during the past few years, that story has been supplanted (indeed, the idea of such a list has been rendered obsolete, as there are now at least thirty stories that belong in the "top ten"), but I was reminded once again of "E for Effort" while reading Sherrred's recent Ballantine novel, Alien Island.

was not visible. Consequently, shadows had no form.

"A single window on the north-west side of the house reflected the light back in a dull fashion, without movement, except once when the reflection of a pigeon, wheeling above the garden, splashed across it. No movement came from the house. No sound came from the house.

"G lived not in the house but in a wooden bungalow in the garden, overlooked by the window set high in the north-west side of the house. The bungalow, which contained only one room, measured about five by four meters, being longer than it was deep. It was raised above the ground on low pillars of brick. It was constructed of planks arranged vertically on the front and rear and horizontally on the sides. Its roof was also of planks, covered with asphalt; the asphalt was secured in place by large flat-headed nails which dug into the black material. Cracks ran around many of the nails.

"The wooden bungalow had two windows. These were fitted in its front wall, one on either side of the door. This was the only door. It did not fit well. The windows contained large single panes of glass. The window-frames and the door had been painted with white paint. Although dirt had greyed this paint, it was still in moderately good condition and not in particular need for repainting. The rest of the wooden bungalow, excluding of course the roof, had been painted yellow. This paint had proved less satisfactory than the white, peeling off in many places to reveal the bare wood underneath."

And only sixty-thousand, two-hundred-and-four words to go.....



NOVA 1 edited by Harry Harrison—Delacorte Press, \$4.95
Reviewed by Richard Delap

A new addition to the growing list of anthologies consisting of original material, Nova 1 is not as memorable as some of the early Orbit volumes, lacking the consistency of always good and often better stories, but still has enough bell-ringers to make this initial foray a promising sendoff to what will presumably become a series. Of the 15 stories included, two were previously published by unnamed sources so obscure that their presence here might as well be considered "first publication."

Five of the stories are well above average. J.R. Pierce's "The Higher Things," both a direct descendent of Wells and a jolly tribute to Stanley Weinbaum, relates the adventures of Haskel van Manderpootz in a funny tale interwoven with ideas that hold enough lively action and genuine humor to solidly pack a story ten times its length.

From the homophonic title, to the androids mindlessly (?) fighting and dying in a dirty jungle war, to the careful but crazy balance in human/android relations, Gene Wolfe's "The Horrors of War" creates a terrifying, hopeless feeling that will leave the reader wondering: can it really be...?

In "Mary and Joe," Naomi Mitchison precisionally examines the various facets of 'normal' and 'abnormal,' wielding a scalpel that cuts to the core of both individual and group psychology with a single double-purpose slice. If you think politics, skin grafts, and sex can have no more than oblique connections, Mitchison cleverly shows you how wrong you can be.

Before and after, cause and effect, "Faces & Hands"—all are insights into people, and people are James Sallis' primary concern in this timeless, beautifully and vividly worded picture of the levels of sorrow. It's far too subtle to explain, however. It just tears into you with velvet claws.

In a "model prison" of the future—no bars, no guards, only a small black box implanted within each prisoner that emits unbearable messages of pain to escapees—man still struggles against any science that seeks to make him less of a man. The irony of Donald E. Westlake's "The Winner" is uplifting, and the story is very good.

As fine as the foregoing stories are, nothing quite prepares one for Gordon R. Dickson's "Jean Dupres," surely one of the very best stories Mr. Dickson has written, ever. It combines two of fiction's most difficult themes to handle believably—the clash of cultures and the emotional trauma of adolescence. As the human settlers on Utword battle to the death with the native Klahari (reminiscent of the African Rorke's Drift episode), a young boy struggles valiantly to reconcile his human heritage and Utword environment. Every incident runs the risk of falling prey to nonsensical heroics or slushy sentiment, and it is to Dickson's credit, extreme credit, that neither risk is fulfilled. It should be remembered at awards time next year.

Freud would have gloated over Chan Davis' "Hexamion," a weighty, fetal-fetish extrapolation (on that seemingly outdated mad-scientist's-experiment theme) involving a group of adolescents raised since infancy in a free-fall environment. "Terminus Est" by Barry N. Malzberg is a deft rendering of an incident



on the moon, as old as humanity and as real as the morning headlines, which makes murder per se the milder of the story's shocks.

The remaining stories are disappointments, especially as they've been bound for permanency in hardcovers. Robin Scott's "The Big Connection" is a mad, mod version of the three wishes fairy-tale (in either interpretation of that word), riddled with cloyingly hip terminology and a generally naive sense of humor. "A Happy Day In 2381" by Robert Silverberg seems to have been written in a hurry, for the dramatic possibilities inherent in this story of a future Earth living in utter harmony are left sticking up like sore thumbs of inconsistency.

Harrison calls Brian Aldiss' "Swastika!" black humor in the line of Catch-22 and Dr. Strangelove, but what really happened to Hitler, and why, is much closer to a distasteful hybrid of Ellison-volume and Spinrad subtlety. It simply lacks class, while David Gerrold's sardonic final twist to "Love Story In Three Acts" is as unexpected as a hole in a doughnut, for the exploitive language describing the climactic sex scene between the partners of a crumbling marriage smacks too loudly of thoughtless assumption.

Like gossiping over a loudspeaker, the technique diminishes the message in K.M. O'Donnell's (Barry Malzberg) "In the Pocket," an unsavory little item in which the point made is shallow and obvious when compared with the subject, a cure for cancer.

A single man, alone in a space station and guarding against enemy aliens, is presented with a problem: is the woman who appears from nowhere really human as she claims or an alien cleverly disguised? "The Whole Truth" is not a very fresh idea, and Piers Anthony neither sets up the situation convincingly nor resolves it with much care. And finally, Ray Bradbury's "And This Did Dante Do" is a short and, to my mind, not terribly valid poem forging an analog link between ancient and modern horrors.

The Dickson story alone is worth the price of a paperback—and, well, maybe even a hardcover for the well-heeled—so despite a more than acceptable percentage of duds, the book is still recommended.



NEWS FROM ELSEWHERE by Edmund Cooper—Berkley X1696, 60¢
Reviewed by Ted Pauls

News From Elsewhere is one of the finest short story collections I've read in the past year or so. Cooper is, in an unspectacular sort of way, one of the more talented writers in the field. He narrates with skillful, economic precision, he has a flair for a particular type of crisp, light dialogue reminiscent of Zelazny, and he is capable in his writing of great sensitivity and depth without in any way interfering with his principal task of telling a story. Of the eight selections in this volume, six are

top-flight stories, and even the other two are only, at worst, uninspired—certainly not poorly done.

"M 81: Ursa Major" is a well-done hard science fiction story of the Heinlein, Anderson, Clarke school, concerning the first experimental flight of a spaceship with an intergalactic ftl drive. It is an ordinary story in all but the fine writing up until the end, where it turns in a direction I hadn't expected.

"The Enlightened Ones" is about a survey ship that discovers a planet inhabited by an apparently primitive but actually super-advanced and infinitely wise people. It's not an original plot, and it was fairly obvious to me early on how it was going to turn out, but it is so superbly done that this doesn't really matter.

"Judgement Day" is an excellent and sensitive Atomageddon story, and "The Intruders" is a story about the first manned flight to the moon which is impressive even in these post-Apollo 11 days when reality has overrun such a large chunk of fiction. In "The Butterflies", we have another planetary survey tale which combines an appealing characterization of a robot, a gimmick which surprised me and, once again, some excellent writing, to make a thoroughly worthwhile story. And then there is "Welcome Home," a beautifully done and moving story about the first Mars expedition and what it learns about mankind.

One of the two less than brilliant selections is "The Menhir," which opens the collection. It is a post-Atomageddon, humanity-reduced-to-primitive-tribalism story, which has a nice atmosphere but very little substance. It is also somewhat lacking in explanation—for, e.g., a dead character who returns to life. The other comparatively inadequate story is "The Lizard of Woz," which is precisely the kind of story that the title would suggest: a farce reminiscent of Isaac Asimov at his worst. Cooper manages to make even this readable in places, but on the whole it wasn't really worth his effort to write or mine to read—what can even an Edmund Cooper do with a story about a lizard-like alien who converses with a cardboard American and a cardboard Russian, then falls in love with a talking komodo dragon named Kanna-Belle?

News From Elsewhere, in any event, is a fine collection of original stories, six of which are outstanding and several of which are all by themselves worth the price of the book.



THE WITCHES OF KARRES by James H. Schmitz—Ace A-13, 75¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

It is easy to write rapturous pages about Delany or Zelazny. I could say volumes about Heinlein or Sturgeon. But about James H. Schmitz's The Witches of Karres I can only say that as long as I was reading it, as long as I remember it, the world will be a more pleasant place to live in.

In ye far distant future, a kindly, simple-hearted, and not too adventurous commercial traveler named Pausert, who has just made enough money to return home to Nikkeldpain to marry his betrothed, rescues a young girl from a beating. Her name

is Maleen. She has two sisters, just girls, who she begs him to buy also. He does. He takes them home to their mysterious Karres.

Immediately, he finds one of the girls, Goth, has stolen a fortune in gems to return his favor. There are warships after him. Cornered, he finds the three little girls know the secret of a drive which removed them far from their pursuers. It is only the first of many discoveries Captain Pausert encounters with the three witches.

The book divides into three parts. The meeting of the participants, the intrigue with the space pirate leader The Agandar, and final battle with the Nuris. However, the parts are so nicely woven together they do not force the reader to adjust and re-adjust his progress. Everything



that could go right in a novel goes right in this one. Every reason one loves SF is in this one. It is something that takes a seat in the front row of your memory and remains forever.



DAMNATION ALLEY by Roger Zelazny—Putnam \$4.95, Berkley S-1846, 75¢

Reviewed by Richard Delap

Pity poor Hell Tanner for, with his background of "degenerate" violence and a prison sentence for murder, he's

being blackmailed by Mr. Denton, Secretary of Traffic of the nation of California, into driving a radiation-shielded car across the war-ravaged country to deliver a serum to plague-ridden Boston—cut to: short scene of the President of Boston and his aide counting death statistics from both the plague and looters, so the reader will not remain ignorant of the real, pressing need this city has—and must beat up his innocent brother, followed with a bribe-gift of money, to make him give up the idea of accompanying Hell on what will be a hellish journey which includes all the terrors and mutation monsters of Damnation Alley, a journey that begins as Hell and two other drivers move into the great Southwestern desert that Zelazny makes dull with color but soon livens up with a giant Gila monster that falls on one of the other cars and kills a man when Hell decides that this monster is impeding his progress and must be done in immediately, followed by one example (of many to come) of Hell's vindictive mannerisms as he throws a cigaret into the wreckage and causes an explosion that leaves the others with no body to bury but gives Hell some extra time to soon exchange rambling personal histories with his new companion, Greg, the survivor from the mishap with the Gila, as they move on to listen to a priest deliver a sermon in which many words have been deleted and replaced by lines (—) to no effect other than a mild confusion, watch some giant, possibly rabid bats, and plow through dust devils to reach Salt Lake City where Hell's habit of flicking cigaret ashes over anything near enough to get flicked on is getting boring from repetition and where Hell feeds an image of 'niceness' to the inhabitants until he finds another object for his cruelty and beats up what he terms a "pusher," a bit of excitement which I presume is supposed to carry the reader through the following one-paragraph monolog of interminably dull reminiscences until he and Greg move on to Kansas City (more Bats!) and from there to St. Louis—pause for: short episode in which two policemen kill a young looter; well, this is as good a place as any for it—then on to Indiana where they crash through a roadblock and where Hell must finally tie up Greg who by this time wants to turn back (and who can blame him!), and on to Ohio where, while staying in a barn during a rainstorm, they meet the book's most realistic and least pretentious character, Geoffrey Kanis, who seems quite mad right up until the moment when Hell shoots and kills him as the reader wonders who's really crazy and who sane, especially when Zelazny makes first mention of the "golden band" Hell wears in his left ear on page 94, which is either sloppy writing or just another surprise that the author thought would keep anyone from noticing that one recently-introduced giant spider has made Hell a bit edgy (quite a deviation from the character to whom we've become accustomed so far) as he drives into eastern Pennsylvania where he is forced to leave the recently injured Greg with the Potter family and shows himself to be just a little human when he makes a gift of his ring to the family's young son (another deviation that is simply making his character less fathomable and less interesting with each page) and tells the boy about his own childhood dream (yech!) before traveling on—pause for: another heart-rending episode with two lovers who decided that death-dealing pills are better than hanging around in this plague-ridden novel, er, world—finally picking up a cycle-gang girl, Corny, who gives him

a little company and a little sex until the gang gets back on his trail—one more time: a mawkish doctor-and-nurse episode which would be inexcusable even from a consistently bad writer and is infuriating from Zelazny—and, just outside Boston, Corny is killed by a sniper which may make the reader weepy-eyed enough to not notice the following 2½ page one sentence descriptive passage that stacks up as a pointless author's intrusion (I mean, I don't understand how any writer could find an excuse for carrying out one sentence at that length, do you?) but at least gets us all to the big, climactic battle with another cycle gang and the symbolic, ironic windup in which the "heavens still throw garbage."

There was a short version of this story published in GALAXY a couple of years ago, and it read much better as a straight adventure story minus the 'stylish' elaborations. If the heavens are throwing garbage, you've got one guess as to who's making books from it.



THE WANDERER by Fritz Leiber—Walker, \$5.95, Ballantine 01635, 75¢

THE SILVER EGGHEADS by Fritz Leiber—Ballantine 01634, 75¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

I am told "the proper study of mankind is man." I do not believe that, even though it sounds true. I believe the proper study of mankind is self-indulgence.

Our newspapers and magazines are crammed with articles by leading sociologists and psychologists purporting to be definitive studies of man's behavior. And one is as assinine as another.

The most nearly definitive works on man have been in literature. These works have also been the most self-indulgent. Mark Twain, who wrote the finest descriptions of American boyhood and its war against the Establishment; who also may be credited with the most poignant and scath-



ing literary analysis of race prejudice, was a blatant self-indulger. Everything he wrote was about himself.

Melville was another, even more outrageous egotist. His masterwork, and probably the greatest novel in American literature, is a self-indulgent display of his knowledge of whaling and mistrust of his Deity.

Salinger, Faulkner, Saroyan, Hemingway and a thousand more I could name follow the theme of self-interest religiously. And the truth in them is not hard to discern.

In SF, this is rarely the case. Science-fiction writers of earlier times, and today, seem more interested in ideas and plots unconnected with their personal lives. They disdain emotional displays of their own feelings, their own prides and prejudices. There are some exceptions (i.e. Delany and Sturgeon), but the oldest and most persistent according to my reckoning is Fritz Leiber.

Leiber's works seem to me to be a collection of everything that truly amuses and comforts him. Cats are everywhere. Women in close pursuit. Wisecracks occur consistently. And always there is that undercurrent of satire. Not a caustic, bitter satire, but a gentle snickering under his breath, a genuine sense of amusement at the foibles of man; but, most especially, at himself.

I have a sense of Leiber's presence in his works. A presence not fully delineated in any one work, but scattered through all of them, peeking from between the lines. I catch glimpses of a man who is as sensitive as he is intelligent and can never quite make up his mind which he prefers to be. I see a man who is at war with his own sentimentality, determined to exert his masculinity at all times, but failing with dignity. I hear a man who is deeply involved with his world and his fellow SF writers, but is most involved in himself.

Leiber seems surprised and delighted by himself. He is proud and haughty, prone to snobbishness and downright contempt for incompetents and hypocrites. He is a believer in tough dealings and blunt truths. He is also as against himself as he is for himself.

He resents his snobbishness. He resents his sentimentality. He resents his self-pride and self-delight. He is an ape, he assures us. He is a hack. Nothing more. And the fact that he takes himself seriously irritates him, so he exposes himself in self-satire.

The Silver Eggheads is supposed to be a satire on writers, and the writing profession. But I suspect it is as much a personal revenge on himself as it is on his less honest colleagues. In any case, it is a Leiber trick of polemical magic that should not be missed. It is a potboiler. Trash. Unworthy of Leiber's reputation. But, in its own unpretentious and snickering way, it is more Leiber than his masterpiece—The Wanderer.

The hero of The Wanderer is an innocent and that seems to be what Leiber admires most, the innocents. They may be wrong. Even stupid. But they believe what they see and feel. They are laughed at and kicked around by the intelligentsia, but,

by the end, they emerge as heroes, with integrity and guts.

The Wanderer contains many innocents. Primarily, man-kind. It, too, is a satire. It is a satire on science fiction. The plot, a wandering planet that eats the moon for fuel during its hasty escape from a pursuing, superior foe, is perfect Hollywood stuff and the book makes the most of it. There is the usual holocausts and floods. Lost lovers trying to reach safety. The intrepid band of refugees. The space hero and the Earth hero. The hilarious aliens, whose superiority turns out to have its limitations. Flying saucers and ray guns. And the whole motley crew of them are thrown into chapter after chapter, creating chaos.

But above the satire there is a novel which seems to be the climactic work of Leiber's career. It contains all the elements, all the magic of a lifetime in one magnum opus that tries to cram the world, the flesh and the devil into each chapter. It is all that Leiber has pecked at over the years. All that he loves and loathes.

It is a masterpiece, but one I think only Leiber lovers will fully appreciate.

Leiber is, I believe, trying to say that man is irrelevant to the scheme of things. He is an animal. A speck in the puddle of a single pond in a very large universe. The best he can be is honest. The best kind of honesty is simplicity.

Of course, Leiber is not an animal nor is he simple. He is a giant of a human being and he will probably never forgive himself for it.



STARMIND by Dave Van Arnam—Ballantine, 01626, 75¢

Reviewed by Earl Evers

This is an excellent book on the psychedelic experience, "mind expansion," and the nature of the human personality. Unfortunately, it's also one of the worst pieces of SF adventure fiction I've ever read.

The idea of using SF elements—brain transplants, psi, and a future society based partly on the hippie culture—to present the author's ideas about the mind and its potentials is a natural one, but Van Arnam's writing and plotting techniques are so amateurish they make Starmind almost impossible to read strictly as a novel.

For instance, he uses a pursuit type of plot without characterizing the villains enough so the reader worries about the hero's safety. He sets obstacles in the hero's path without hinting at possible ways through them, so the escape when it comes is unconvincing. And he uses too many plot cliches and uses them poorly—as when the hero seduces a nurse to escape from a hospital, taking about ten minutes to accomplish it, from getting the idea to pulling up his pants and walking out the door. Or when one of the villains catches him and then lets him go for no apparent

reason. (Except that this villain was a hero in a previous Van Arnam novel, or rather a Ted White/Dave Van Arnam collaboration.)

Which brings me to another point—the stylistic tricks Van Arnam learned from Ted White and his circle of fans—turned—pro make a good portion of Starmind unreadable. Ted and Terry Carr have outgrown the tricks, but Dave still seems hung up in them to the point where they distract a reader who gets the ingroup references and simply confuse or bore a reader who doesn't. You can't build good dialog out of cliches and twisted-cliches ripped from fanzines, or out of fragmentary literary references. You can't build descriptions out of scenes from fan-jokes and other SF novels. And you can't get away with pages and pages of "telepathic conversation" using a number of type faces to delineate the characters. This sort of stuff may be fun to write and funny for an insider to read, but it spoils the flow of the story unless deliberately controlled and made unobtrusive.

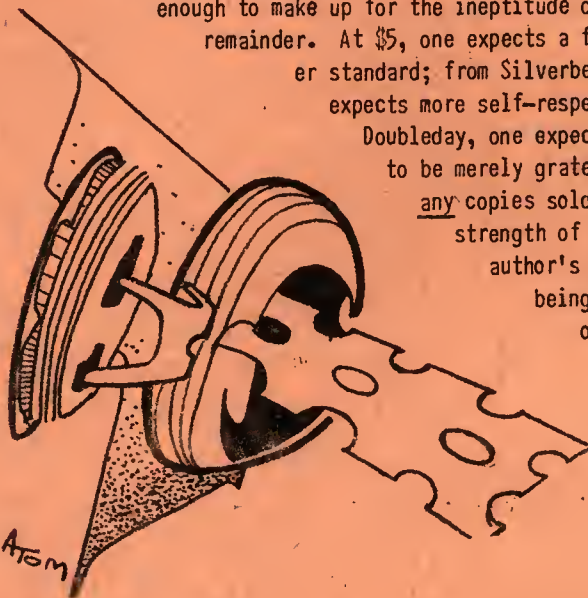
To top it all off, much of Van Arnam's writing is wordy and dull, and every few pages he crops up with a real verbal blunder of some kind—a cliché that sticks out like a sore thumb, or a piece of really atrocious poetic imagery. Yet there are lots of good ideas in Starmind if you look for them, and quite a bit of solid psychedelic information. Well, this is only Van Arnam's third or fourth novel, and his first attempt at a complex, serious theme, so while the novel is a complete failure as fiction, I still have hopes for the author eventually becoming a major SF writer if he works hard enough, long enough. He has the "imaginative" part of "imaginative writing" within his grasp now, and the "writing" part is easier to learn.



PARSECS AND PARABLES by Robert Silverberg—Doubleday, \$4.95

Reviewed by Richard Delap

Four good stories from a total of ten will give the reader a few minutes of entertainment, not really enough to make up for the ineptitude of the remainder. At \$5, one expects a far higher standard; from Silverberg, one expects more self-respect; from Doubleday, one expects them to be merely grateful for any copies sold, the strength of the author's name being the only



selling point.

"Flies," from Dangerous Visions, is a horror story and a message story which succeeds in both respects as even a godlike, outside influence finds that it can work only with what man already possesses, albeit expanded in new directions. "Going Down Smooth," recently in GALAXY and World's Best SF: 1969, is a funny but still frightening look at an analyst-computer that begins to evidence signs indicating the patients are not alone in displaying "mental" disorders—but (shudder) the clever ones manage to hang on for a long, long time. "Sunrise on Mercury" has been outdated scientifically but the dramatic content remains the major force in this well-done tale of an expedition nearing disaster as one crew member suddenly becomes self-destructive and endangers his companions. (This one was in the author's recent anthology, Tomorrow's Worlds.)

Unrequited love has been the subject of more fictional misfires than I would like to count. "Ishmael In Love" has a barrier of species as well, as a dolphin falls head-over-fin for a human female, and is good enough to survive the clumsy additive of criminals and counterplots. (Credited to this year's F&SF, the story has not yet appeared there as of this writing.) ((3-20-70))

If you've read the above stories, you've already skimmed the cream. "The Man Who Never Forgot" substitutes sentiment as a second-rate stand-in for characterization; "One Way Journey" simplifies psychotherapy to suit the needs of an uninteresting affair between a spaceman and an ugly alien woman; "Road to Nightfall" is a heady brew of the consequences of full-scale war, including cannibalism, that Silverberg, with an eye everywhere but on the kettle, lets boil away.

In "Counterpart," failure of an experiment to blend the minds of two men is not nearly so surprising as the trite and pretentious melodrama that is its surround. And, if traditional prejudice were as easy to break down as it is in "The Outbreeders," there would be no earthly counterpart to even inspire such silly juvenilia as this.

Finally, "The Fangs of the Trees" tells of a plantation of possibly intelligent trees, bearing phallic, hallucinogenic fruit, which the owner must destroy to prevent the spread of a "rust disease." I can't understand the use of symbolic and heavy sexuality—the owner carries his own blight of an incestuous impulse toward his niece, who seeks to protect the trees—which serves only to make the story depressing with no real point to its morbidity.

I hardly expect (though sometimes sigh for) a consistently excellent one-author collection, but would a consistently good one be asking too much?



CARDER'S PARADISE by Malcolm Levene—Walker, \$4.95
Reviewed by Paul Walker

There are books that excite each of us to the point

where we rush out and thrust them on others, demanding they read them. We insist this book is the "greatest novel ever written" and are crushed when the one we placed so much trust in tosses it aside with an indifferent shrug. We may even come to realize that our impetuosity has destroyed our long-established reputation for good taste and judgement. Well, despite my wisdom, I'm going to risk everything and say you "must read this fantastic book!"

It is probably the most humorless black comedy I've ever read. I doubt Levene considers it a comedy at all. It is oddball, ugly, and brutal. There is not a single character to identify with nor even to admire. The atmosphere of the book is dark and forbidding. The tone is one of savage despair.

Yet it is one of the most provocative and startlingly skillful novels I've ever seen in SF. The story (about the weight of a novelet) is told through the eyes of several characters. Each is an official or a prisoner of a Devil's Island in the near future. Each is as much a prisoner as the other. All are victims of the Establishment.

I could discuss the plot and characters for pages, but that is not what makes me so eager for you to read the book. Malcolm Levene is unknown to me and to those who I have asked about him. Yet his skill and originality are devastating. I've never read an SF book like this before, and I believe it deserves its chance to be read and discussed by many other people. To read the book is a deeply disturbing experience.



A GUN FOR DINOSAUR by L. Sprague de Camp—Curtis 09018, 95¢
Reviewed by Barry Gillam

L. Sprague de Camp is, overwhelmingly, a practical man.



Most writers list on the acknowledgements page of their collections merely the copyright holders. De Camp gives the title of the magazine, issue, and where it has been reprinted. It's typical. He watches his details lovingly and always tries to be accurate. Common sense is the by-word in his stories. Hal Clement is also the type of writer to note that when boys go swimming around a coral reef they wear their shoes. But there's a difference: de Camp has a sense of humor. Here is an anecdote told in the title story:

"The American Museum of Natural History sent a part of forty-eight to the Early Cretaceous, with a fifty-caliber machine gun. They killed a sauropod and spent two solid months skinning it and hacking the carcass apart and dragging it to the time machine. I know the chap in charge of that project, and he still has nightmares in which he smells decomposing dinosaur. They had to kill a dozen big theropods attracted by the stench, so they had them lying around and rotting, too. And the theropods ate three men of the party despite the big gun."

Some of the best stories are "A Gun for Dinosaur" (you have to be big to handle a gun for dinosaur, but if you aren't sensible and quick-thinking, you're still in trouble), "The Guided Man" (Benevolent mind control—e.g., a professional dancer takes over the client at dances. But where does benevolence stop?), "Internal Combustion" (Five derelict robots scrounge for fuel in their useless old age. They are any old men, down on their luck.), "Throwback" (A Gigantanthropus, nine feet tall, is signed by a football team, but the large hero's main problems are outside the stadium.), "Judgement Day" (A physicist has discovered a chain reaction which, if started, will consume the Earth. He must decide whether or not to report the discovery.), "Gratitude" (Three suburban gardeners cultivate contraband plants from Venus, only to discover exactly why they are flora non grata.) and "A Thing of Custom" (The problems of dealing with visiting extraterrestrial diplomats of several shapes, sizes and predilections.).

There are fourteen stories and the best are among the most entertaining to come out of the 50's. This sounds patronizing but I don't mean it to be. A Gun for Dinosaur is probably the best collection of de Camp's short stories. (I might think twice if I reread The Wheels of If.)



INFINITY ONE edited by Robert Hoskins—Lancer 75-108, 75¢
Reviewed by Richard Delap

Subheaded "a magazine of speculative fiction in book form," this anthology of original stories is a modern revival of INFINITY SCIENCE FICTION (20 issues, 1955-1958), and like its namesake it carries on the magazine tradition—of necessity—the very best side-by-side with some of the near-worst. Overall, it's not really a very good collection, but if you're one of those willing to buy a maga-

zine for the occasional good stories within, this volume will be worth your time and money.

The one reprint—"to break our own rules for the first and only time"—is Arthur C. Clarke's excellent Hugo-winner "The Star," especially relevant at this time for revealing how the current religious upheaval (inconsequential, sniveling bickering over 'right' and 'wrong') is, in itself, the essence of immorality. It's undiminished by rereading and a top notch example to new readers as well.

Three short-short fables—Stephen Barr's "The Absolute Ultimate Invention," Gordon R. Dickson's "Operation P-Button," and Michael Fayette's "The Man on the Hill"—are minor wastes of space, though the Dickson piece is mildly amusing.

Several well-known authors have contributed works that fall beneath their, or the reader's, general acceptance level. Robert Silverberg's "The Pleasure of Our Company" juggles a stale and meagre plot about a political refugee hurtling across the galaxy in his spaceship, his only companions "cube" facsimiles of family and, oddly enough, historical personages, while details are rather listlessly contrived for the basic situation.

"The Communicators," a short novel by Poul Anderson, drags its plot behind it like a ball and chain. Mankind, now a blend of restructured science and barbarism, manages to translate coded messages from the stars and travel once again to the moon. Consisting almost entirely of a string of cliché-ridden lectures, it's impossibly dull, the kind of thing those nameless analyst-readers of ANALOG seem to dote on.

A planet of plants working in unison to destroy a shipwrecked (?) human is the basis of Katherine MacLean's "Echo," a short, vague and generally old-fashioned story that is much too brief to work up the emotional impact the authoress seems intent on producing. Miriam Allen deFord's "The Tiger" displays a traveling sideshow advertising a tame Bengal tiger, a pretty ticket-seller and her father, a young lovesick farm boy, and...but I needn't explain since everyone has surely read this story dozens of times before. Then remember those old WEIRD TALES stories about the damned forever trapped in a devilish world of horrors after death? Dean R. Koontz has tried to update it with cycles, leather and chains in "Nightmare Gang" and, oh Lordy!, what a mess!

A new author, George Zebrowski, tells of men in orbit around the Earth who are branded by their past and promised nothing for the future. The impassioned message, a statement against the economic and social uneasiness that may keep all but the true artists from finding a destiny among the stars, does not come across well, due to a very inefficient artsy-craftsy approach.

Moving on to better galaxy-pastures, we have Kris Neville and K.M. O'Donnell's "Pacem Est," a demoralizing, vicious look at religion and war on a far-distant, future world where men continue to vent their aggressions while a group of nuns continue to offer...hope? comfort? Who's helping whom, and why, will likely have both the religious and non-religious screaming with equal verve...which, I presume, will delight the auth-

ors no end.

"The Packerhaus Method" by Gene Wolfe is, to say the least, an odd reworking of the deceptively-sweet-little-old-lady theme, a sort of sf'd Arsenic and Old Lace. It's the type of thing quite popular when INFINITY was a magazine and should hold any reader not overly familiar with it. Pat De Graw's "Inside Mother"—adolescents left alone to grow into maturity in an environment they understand as little as they understand themselves—has a stylishness that transcends its familiar plotting, and is good, even in its implied hopelessness. And speaking of old plots, R.A. Lafferty hauls out the oldest in "Hands of the Man," involving a poor "skyman" and a shrewd merchant in a barroom hassle over a famous jewel. Few but Lafferty could even begin to get away with it.

"Keeping an Eye On Janey" is a ridiculous, frantic, entirely insane farce that perversely mixes pot shots at hard-boiled detective stories, gothic novelists, the machine-with-a-personality, cuckoldry, and the Mafia. If you like your humor on the zany side, Ron Goulart's one-liner's (some real beauts!) bid fair to rival the fondly-remembered bellylaughs Henry Kuttner once did so well.

Anne McCaffrey strikes gold with "The Great Canine Chorus," in which a policeman and a crippled, telepathic young girl cross paths and, later, purposes. What at first seems a heavy dose of bathos takes a razor-sharp turn into insightful psychology while the author pulls out all stops in an extremely clever and gutsy climax.

Edward Wellen, too long absent from the sf scene, writes with an evocativeness—"Her eyes widened in a slow explosion..."—and precision and restraint that many better-known writers have never achieved. He winds his story around an incident in the unknown depths of space as both human and alien culture meet, merge and part with neither aware of the event. "These Our Actors" is gratifyingly excellent.

Hmmm, the more I think about those last two, the more inclined I am to tell you to forget the lesser stories and get this one. Yeah, get this one.



AND THEN I READ...Book Reviews

by The Editor

(Stop that groaning out there!)

The struggle continues to review every book received. Well, at least 90% of them. The ads in this issue allow me to add some extra review pages. And you can expect longer-than normal review sections in the next three issues, at least until I determine if it is really possible and realistic to try to review everything.

This issue is late because I was on vacation for two weeks. Well, actually not late, since it is within the eight issues per year schedule, which I have decided is the best schedule for the work-load involved and my own sanity. I'll also be taking a 2-week vacation around Christmas time, so that issue will be "late". Actually, I dare not send a mailing of SFR into the Post Awful system after November because of the Christmas Crush.

A fan reviewer not too long ago started a review of a Philip K. Dick novel by saying, "Here's Phil Dick playing with reality again..."

It applies to A Maze of Death (Doubleday, \$4.95) too, except that 'playing' isn't the right word. Exploring or revealing or cataloguing is more accurate.

Because Philip K. Dick is perhaps the most serious and dedicated sf novelist we have. He is endlessly fascinated with "reality." He is forever digging in its garden and turning up weird rocks, artifacts, treasures...weeds....

A Maze of Death is difficult to review if the reviewer is reluctant to give away the character of the reality beneath the reality that is explored in the 200 pages that precede the final two short chapters.

I am not above quoting the dust-jacket teaser; it gives a good, concise idea of the major part of the book:

The landscape was alien and inert. A mall cluster of temporary barracks was the only break in a panorama of monotony and hostility. This was Delmak-0. From various points in the galaxy a disparate group of fourteen people had gathered believing that finally their professional and personal aspirations would be fulfilled in this new world of new beginnings.

Shortly after the last arrivals, however, communication was mysteriously destroyed with the satellite which would have revealed the mutual purpose of the colonization. And there was no turning back—one of the contingencies of their mission was they should all arrive in one-way space ships. They were stranded—a colony of outcasts thrown back to the beginning of time. Their hope lay in will and ingenuity as well as supplication to the omnipotent Mentufactor to intercede—this was a century when God held living form and being.

But organization and trust were difficult. And

then without warning came murder. Seth Morley, an embittered marine biologist and Dr. Babble, for once overcoming his hypochondria obsession, proved beyond doubt that indeed Ben Tallchief's fatal heart attack had not been due to natural causes. Now existence became a one-to-one struggle and the odds for survival seemed slim with a psychotic among them who killed without motive. Soon, from fear and mistrust, they would kill each other off and whoever had planned this fantastic travesty could term it "successful," unless, of course, one of them decided to solve the diabolical jigsaw puzzle.

And in the last chapter, after giving the reader an "explanation" of the previous realities, Dick— Well, Dick Giveth and Dick Taketh Away. He does not like frames and boundaries and neat, secure, solid endings. He will fracture the frame, tear the fabric, put a gate in the fence around his story-worlds—always. No matter how many levels he has dropped you in his story, when you step out and thud your mental feet on the floor and mutter hopefully, "This is solid. This is the last layer of the reality onion"—then the concrete goes soft and you sink...

I like Philip K. Dick's books. I like his style. I can live without certainty, but there must be many, many people who despise his writing for its imposed insecurity.

I think one day professors will be writing long books exploring Philip K. Dick's inner worlds.

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I hate to do this to James Blish, but I do believe he is an intellectual. This is not the Curse it would be to a writer of Westerns or Confessions, however, for being an intellectual—and showing it in your fiction—isn't fatal to an SF writer.

The stories in Anywhen (Doubleday, \$4.95) (one novella, six short stories) show clearly that Blish is intellectually bent, knows literature and is not afraid to show it in his work. He writes with an elegant sense of phrasing and sentence structure (and story-structure as shown in Black Easter and its sequel "The Day After Judgement" which just appeared in the August-Sept. GALAXY).

Of course Blish has written straight "commercial" sf prose, and very well, as in his future history series involving the invention of the anti-gravity "spindizzy" which allowed the cities of Earth to migrate through the galaxy in search of work. (These stories are all collected into the giant Cities In Flight, Avon W187, \$1.25—to be reviewed next issue by Fred Patten—and a bargain you should snap up at first opportunity...by mail if you can't find the book on the stands.)

But back to Anywhen: Blish says in his preface, "Each of the stories was directly commissioned by a magazine editor, an opportunity I used in each case to try an experiment of one kind or another."

In my opinion the best of them is the expanded "A Style

of Treason" (formerly "A Hero's Life" when it appeared as a novelette in IMPULSE, a short-lived British SF magazine).

The problem of the traitor-hero is to manage to engineer an alliance between High Earth and a hostile former Earth colony against a race of insidious aliens who are expanding their empire. In this future, treachery is the game used in place of diplomacy and using the tools and rules of that game is highly dangerous. The story is a fascinating interweaving of deadly action and chessmaster cunning.

Of the short stories (all interesting and provoking) I liked "The Writing of the Rat" best for its neat puncturing of anthropomorphic assumptions; and "A Dusk of Idols" for its skillful and convincing creation of an alien culture and environment.

I didn't much like "No Jokes on Mars" for its situational incredibility, "None So Blind" for its find-me-if-you-can fantasy, and "How Beautiful With Banners" which Blish wrote (he says) full of symbols and which I was unable to identify (but usually a symbol has to come up to me and bonk me on the nose before I'll notice it), and which was tortured and to me incomprehensible as a story, although I am all for heterosexuality—even among flying cloaks. (No, I will not explain.)

The problem involved with reviewing a collection of stories is that it is impossible to do each story justice. It is immensely frustrating to skip over ideas and concepts and choice bits of writing—and lousy bits of writing—for lack of space in a review. For a short story usually has a much content as a novel and is as worthy of analysis, perhaps more so since I believe short story writing is more demanding.

I have no solution short of a foundation subsidizing this or a similar magazine and allowing virtually unlimited pages per issue.

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The Jupiter Legacy by Harry Harrison (Bantam S5445, 75¢) was originally published by Doubleday as Plague From Space in 1965. It is now being flogged to take advantage of the success of The Andromeda Strain. That's the publishing biz. I do not sneer at or object to this practice. Only if this book were shoddy merchandise.

But it's a good, well-paced, intriguing story with a surprise ending that is



logical and acceptable and exciting. The medical detail, the characterizations, the "feel" of a future reality in which all Earth life is being destroyed by a disease that was emitted from a returned Jupiter ship, all are plausible and well-done.

Harrison has little regard for politicians and by-the-book mentalities. In this case the world is saved by a rebel doctor and a Patton-like general who uses a force of loyal-to-him-above-all soldiers to open the sealed space ship to find the answer to the plague's beginning...and end.

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In The Phoenix and the Mirror (Ace 66100, 75¢) Avram Davidson doesn't quite play fair by first making the magician hero, Vergil, go to enormous trouble and time to create a magic bronze mirror which will show the image of a kidnapped princess, and then, that accomplished, having him abruptly fall in love with the girl, requiring an anticlimactic journey, a struggle with deadly desert creatures, a Cyclops, and the Red Man, a creature of magic and time.

The writing, though, is marvelous; full of arcane detail and fantasy, so adroitly meshed that the magic is fact in this Medieval setting. As you read you accept as true the altered history and fantastic life-forms, like the manticores in the sewers of Naples.

The book is well-worth reading. It is a marvelous performance, a wonder of occult knowledge and imagination. The making of the speculum (the mirror) is almost too exhaustively presented—the painstaking rituals, the procedures, the extraordinarily purity of the materials needed—this becomes the whole point of the story until that seeming added ending.

Categorizing this book is difficult; it might be called hard fantasy because the magic is hard work, limited, and governed by strict "natural laws."

+++

Dean R. Koontz has a winner in Hell's Gate (Lancer 74656, 75¢). His gut-involving style of writing, most effective in pure action sequences, is in gear 90% of the time in this book and the result is a gripping reading experience.

The plot involves a programmed, genetically altered super man who is sent from the future to now to battle aliens who are invading Earth by way of portals along the probability line of alternate Earths.

The hero, initially without memory, gradually becomes truly human, falls in love with a beautiful young local woman, and finally, in a series of vivid battles with robot killers from the aliens' portal (and with the aliens themselves as he crosses through into their base to blow it up, be captured, escape, return to finish the job) defeats them and returns through the portal to this Earth to his waiting woman.

Dean still, occasionally, overwrites and sometimes his

metaphors get too obtrusive, as: "His mind was a cauldron of doubt, boiling, spouting streamers of steam downwards into his body."

But Hell's Gate is a helluva good read, and Dean's best book to date.

+++

John Brunner wrote The Atlantic Abomination in 1960 and Ace (03300, 60¢) has reprinted it. The story reads like a plot for a very good Monster-Against-The-World movie. In this case an alien of incredible selfish evil who rules by controlling minds and punishing by pain went into a kind of escape hibernation during a period of cataclysmic volcanic activity ages in the past. He is awakened by a team of exploring scientists under the sea. He emerges to attempt a take-over of Earth.

Formula fiction but I enjoyed it.

+++

Dell has published Ubik by Philip K. Dick (9200, 95¢) and banners it "The Science Fiction Treat of the Year!" I'll go along with that. It is a constantly surprising, absorbing journey into a fantastically involuted, layered reality-world that I consider one of Dick's best. It's a roller-coaster ride: hang on and keep your eyes open. Not that it will do you any good....

+++

SOME REPRINTS

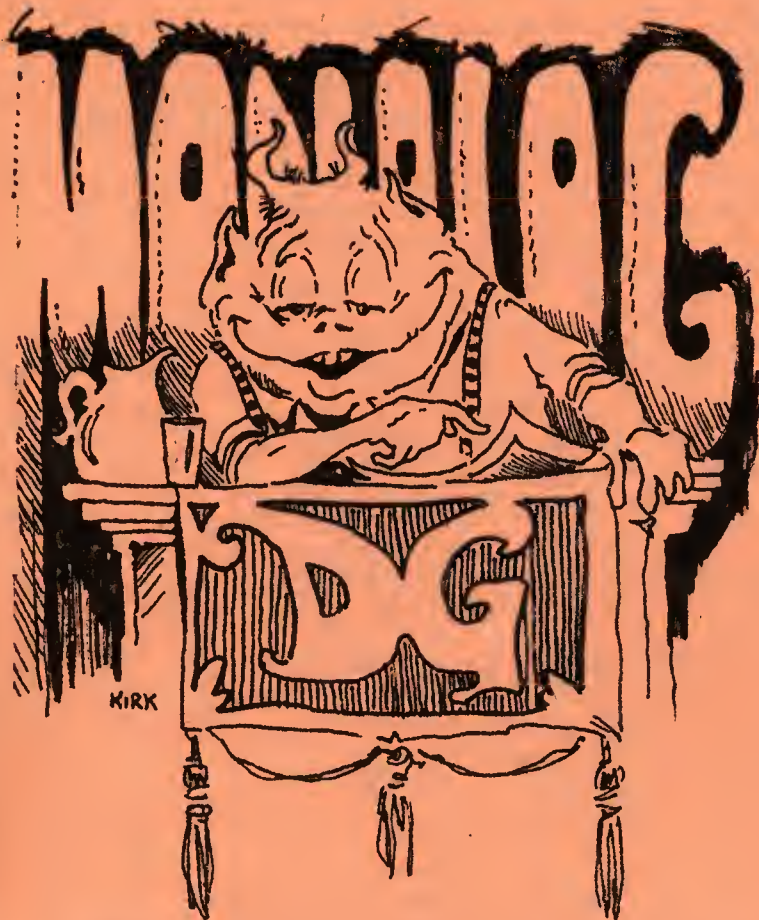
Fear & The Ultimate Adventure by L. Ron Hubbard—Berkley S1811, 75¢. Two short novels from UNKNOWN.

The Spider #4, City of Flaming Shadows by Grant Stockbridge—Berkley X1795, 60¢

Doc Savage #50, Devil on the Moon by Kenneth Robeson—Bantam H5450, 60¢

MAIL ORDER INFORMATION

ACE BOOKS, 1120 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. 10¢ per book handling fee.
SIGNET—New American Library, P.O. Box 2310, Grand Central Sta., New York, NY 10017. 10¢ fee.
BERKLEY Pub. Corp., 200 Madison Av., New York, NY 10016. 10¢.
PAPERBACK LIBRARY, 315 Park Av. South, New York, NY 10010. 10¢.
BELMONT BOOKS, 185 Madison Av., New York, NY 10016. 10¢ fee
LANCER BOOKS, 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. 10¢ fee.
BALLANTINE BOOKS, 101 Fifth Av., New York, NY 10003. 5¢ fee.
AVON BOOKS, 959 Eighth Ave, New York, NY 10019. 10¢ fee.
FAWCETT GOLD MEDAL BOOKS, Greenwich, Conn. 10¢ fee.
DOUBLEDAY & CO., 277 Park Ave., New York, NY 10017. No fee.
WALKER & CO., 720 Fifth Av., New York, NY 10019. No fee.
DELL Pub. Co., 750 Third Av., New York, NY 10017. 10¢ fee.
BANTAM BOOKS, 666 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10019. 10¢ fee.
G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS, 200 Madison Av., New York, NY 10016. No fee.
PYRAMID BOOKS, 9 Garden St., Moonachie, NJ 07074. 10¢ fee.
POCKET BOOKS, 1 West 39th St., New York, NY 10018. 15¢ fee.
ADVENT: PUBLISHERS, P.O. Box 922B, Chicago, Ill. 60690. No fee.



+ MONOLOG was originally intended as a place for one-voice editorials and comments, then shifted to a collection of bits of news and short quotes and occasional comments. And so it remains because of a need for a place to put these items.

And there is once in a while an overlap from other areas—as now as I ran out of room in "And Then I Read..." before I could disagree slightly with Richard Delap on his review of Zelazny's Damnation Alley.

I don't believe Roger Zelazny is much interested in science in his sf. He plainly writes science-fantasy. Or fantasy-science fiction. He asks the reader to accept some patently absurd event and environment in Damnation Alley (which is the old formula story about a criminal forced to perform a task for the State which will give a complete pardon if he succeeds). It is pulp done to a lovely, compelling, dramatic perfection. I found myself forgiving Zelazny things I would not forgive in other writers. His debris-laden upper winds that scour mountains flat, his giant bats and lizards and tornados...his central character, Hell Tanner...they all reek of don't-give-a-damn colorful, action-packed writing. I was a kid again, eyes glued, riveted to the pages.

Thanks, Roger, for writing a helluva fine bad book.

+ Several readers have mentioned that according to the published circulation figures, GALAXY and IF have given away over a half-million free copies in the last year. It would be interesting to know where and to whom.

+ Philip Jose Farmer is selling his house and plans to move

East (perhaps the Roanoke, Va. area) to be within physical reach of the NY markets.

+ Charles Platt mentioned in a letter that "NEW WORLDS has in effect ceased publication."

FOCAL POINT's latest issue says that Mike Moorcock has apparently saved the magazine again by securing financial support in New York.

And Steve Carrigan wrote from England: "Tell Piers Anthony and the rest of those bum American Writers that they're out of luck 'cause as of ish 201 Langdon Jones takes over as editor of NEW WORLDS. Charles Platt, after mentioning that he intended to publish science fiction in NEW WORLDS, has been exiled to the U.S. of A. Also: it has been said that he will be editing an American edition of NEW WORLDS. Rumour has it that Langdon Jones, when asked whether he would be featuring more 'true blue' sf in NEW WORLDS replied something to the effect—"What's sf?""

+ Darrell Schweitzer reports: "Tom Purdom will have an Ace Special coming out soon, plus a novel from Berkley. One of them will be a novelization of "Greenplace" from F&SF."

"Larry Niven will be the principal speaker at the 1970 Philcon which will be held the second weekend of November at the Sheraton Hotel in Philly."

"Jack Chalker of Mirage Press says that Ejler Jakobsson of GALAXY told him that he believes the future of SF is in the experimental, the new wave. No more just for fun stuff. This might explain the kind of things GALAXY has been printing lately."

"Roger Zelazny is going to write a mystery novel called Apostate's Gold. (Source: interview transcribed in PHANTASMICOM #2.)"

"Dick Peck has sold to AMAZING and GALAXY. ... Dean Koontz wants to collaborate with Dick on a novel-length sequel to "In Alien Waters." ... Jack Chalker says there is no progress on the projected Harlan Ellison Hornbook which is to contain fiction, essays, poetry, etc., by H.E. who is also designing everything (jacket, format, etc.).

+ Belmont has scheduled for November release The Great Brain Robbery by James P. Fisher (B75-2072), 75¢. An original novel about a college student with psychic powers who travels to an alien planet. There he becomes caught in a web of violence and must decide whether to save the planet or Earth.

+ SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB Winter 1971 selections are:
The Gods of Mars and The Warlord of Mars by ERB, Doubleday imprint, Frazetta jacket and interior illos—\$2.45
The Year of the Cloud by Kate Wilhelm and Ted Thomas—\$1.49

+ SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB January 1971 selections are:
Five Fates by Poul Anderson, Frank Herbert, Gordon Dickson, Harlan Ellison and Keith Laumer—\$1.49
Inter Ice Age 4 by Kobo Abe, a novel—\$1.49

SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB December 1970 selections are:
Quest for the future by A. E. van Vogt, a novel—\$1.49
Anywhen by James Blish, a collection—\$1.49

+ I have a few Rotsler drawings and cartoons available to fan editors. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

- + Steve Fabian writes: "I just sold my first bit of artwork to a prozine. COVEN 13. Inside front cover of the first of the new issues due out soon. A short time back I read in LOCUS that the new owners of COVEN 13 wanted to get some work by Fabian and Barr. Man, did I jump. I sent them some of my SFR covers as samples and said if that kind of stuff was good enough for 'em, I'm willing to give it a try. Darned if they didn't reply with an assignment...and buy my first effort. Gave me the lead story to do for the 2nd issue besides, an E. Hoffman Price tale. So...I guess that makes me a pro now...well, maybe someday; at least it's a start." ... "Jerry Burge is the art editor ((at Coven 13)) and his policy is to pay on receipt of the work (if accepted)." "Jerry also wrote to me that their distributor is forcing them to change the title and increase the format from digest size to 8½ x 11."
- + John J. Pierce writes: "As far as GALAXY/IF go, First Speaker ((of the Second Foundation)) Lester del Rey tells me that the reports of declining circulation mentioned in LOCUS recently were mistaken—based on preliminary figures. The final figures show that sales are on the upswing again, despite the fact that some issues were delayed and a lot of people didn't like Vaughn Bode's comic strip. But Universal decided to make GALAXY bi-monthly on the basis of the preliminary figures, and this may bollix up everything. "I'm also told that, contrary to Bode's assertions, he didn't quit the GALAXY deal; he was cancelled by GALAXY because of the unfavorable public reaction."
- + C. Swann, Asst. to the Editor of FAWCETT WORLD LIBRARY writes: "We are trying to locate a science fiction author by the name of Carlos Munoz, alias T.P. Caravan. We have tried over the months several different people and magazines and the Authors' League, and nobody seems to have any idea. We're pretty desperate, since we want to do a story of his." 67 West 44th St., New York, NY 10036.
- + I have some notes made when Harlan Ellison called a month and a half ago...now to make sense of them. He mentioned that the graphics in his story "The Region Between" which appeared in a recent issue of GALAXY were by him and were in his manuscript. Jack Gaughan formalized them for printing. And that the circular text was not correct in the GALAXY version, but was in the Double-day book Five Fates in which the story appears. He mentioned that he has two books coming out soon: The Prince of Sleep from Ballantine and Demon With a Glass Hand from Doubleday. He and Bob Silverberg have sold a sf story, "Partners in Wonder" to COSMOPOLITAN (a first for that magazine). Let's see...something about Harlan getting \$30 last spring from Sol Cohen...
- + Fans in the Orlando, Fla. region: Anita N. Kovalick would like you to get in touch with her. 2302 Cherrywood Lane, Orlando, Fla. 32803.
- + Avram Davidson is recovering nicely from surgery which involved the removal of sweat glands from a small area of his body.
- + George Hay writes from London: "...the new London N.E. Polytechnic has formally agreed to establish a Science Fiction Foundation, after September 1st 1970, which is when the Poly itself comes into official existence. I have got agreement from Jim Blish, John Brunner and others from here and the U.S. to serve on Board of Advisors, and have written to Arthur C. Clarke to see if he would be Hon. President. I consider this thing to be quite a win, as, though many teach sf, it is generally done under Chair of Eng. Lit., whereas this will be SF as such."
- + SFR was voted the Best Fanzine in John Berry's Egoboo Poll. I came in 3rd in the Best Fan Writer category, Harry Warner and Ted White ahead of me. Terry Carr and I tied for first in the Number One Fan Face category. SFR tied for third with RENAISSANCE as Most Pretentious Current Fanzine. For all the results get the Vol. 2, #7 FOCAL POINT.
- + I just got a phone call from Charles Platt; he is driving west to San Francisco from NY within a few days, may visit L.A., and then will be going back to England. His address is therefore no longer valid. 8-6-70.
- + I know there are those of you who will glance at Eddy Bertin's Perry Rhodan article in this issue and grumble, "Why does Geis print boring, uninteresting crap like this?" The answer is that Perry Rhodan is a significant corner of sf, there are those who will read it and who are interested, and because I believe it should be published for historical purposes, to get the information in print, as a service to sf as a whole. That "service" aspect of SFR is part of the magazine's reason for existence. The extensive book review section is part of it. But I know that this type of material is a turn-off for many, so I try to balance every issue with contrasting features, humor, articles, columns, and the ever-loving open forum that is the letter column. I don't always have all the right kinds of material I'd like to have in each issue, but I try. I'm a very noble, well-meaning fellow. I have a halo...but it flickers a lot and often goes out. I goof a lot. I make bad editorial judgements sometimes, and often what looks good in the way of a layout in my mind's eye, and on stencil, doesn't look good at all on the mimeographed page. Editing a fanzine of this size and frequency is fun, work, and a trip. I want to thank all you contributors and subscribers who make it possible for me to continue. This is the 19th issue since I revived the magazine in the Fall of 1967. This is in a way a milestone. If you had told me three years ago when I published that 18 page 100 copy issue of PSYCHOTIC that now I would be running off 1200 copies of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW...well, you know what, I would have said. I have no regrets. I look forward with disgusting zest to the next 19 issues.

P.O. BOX 3116



ROBERT SILVERBERG
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Couple of amplifications of
items in SFR 37 —

1) Ted White's implication that SFWA has been deliberately ignoring certain editors in its choice of Nebula Banquet speakers isn't founded in fact. There have been four New York banquets (1967-70) that had guest speakers, and I was in charge of finding speakers for the first three. I established a policy of inviting prozine editors to speak, and tapped Ed Ferman first because he was the least familiar figure among the current editors. The next year I asked Fred Pohl, because he wanted to voice some strong feelings about SFWA, and promised to be an interesting speaker. The year after that, 1969, I invited Campbell, on the theory that it was his turn. He pleaded a prior engagement. Then I asked Kay Tarrant, but she doesn't care to make public appearances. So much for the theory that ANALOG has been ignored. As for the Ultimate group, it was impossible to extend an invitation in 1967, when Ultimate and SFWA were at odds, and in 1968 Ultimate's editor was Harry Harrison, who was on the west coast. (Malzberg's editorship came and went between banquets.) There's no reason of policy why Ultimate's current editor hasn't been invited to speak. If I had been running the 1970 banquet, I probably would have asked him. But I wasn't, and didn't, and the people in charge asked Judy-Lynn. Ted has done such a good job

spiking nonexistent conspiracies in the pages of BEABOHEMA that it saddens me to see him conjuring them up here.

2) C.C. MacApp is not a "he," the same Ted White letter says. Huh? At the 1964 Worldcon Fred Pohl introduced me to the author of the stories that appear under that pseudonym, and he looked male enough to me. Though it is true, come to think of it, that his first name could easily seem to be that of a woman.

Your old mag somehow gets better and better each issue—pithy and incisive without being vicious. (Well, hardly ever.) This man Paul Walker seems like the most interesting new critic in a long time. Who is he, where'd he come from? And thank you for your own little squib on Up the Line. You seem to recognize it for what it was—a put-on, an attempt at the ultimate destruction of the time-paradox theme—whereas a lot of reviewers have taken it straight, with odd results.

((All I know about Paul Walker is that he periodically sends sheafs of reviews and cries, "MORE BOOKS! SEND MORE BOOKS!" Obviously a compulsive reader. Poor fellow.))



PAUL CRAWFORD
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Here's some additional information on the Heinlein collection at the U.C. Santa Cruz library. Several subsequent visits provided me with material a bit more detailed than that in "Archive." Specifically, Heinlein conceived the idea for Stranger in a Strange Land in 1948, working out most of it in note form. He set it aside, however, to work on material with more commercial potential. In 1955 he wrote the first 152 pages of the manuscript before again setting it aside—thus the assigned opus number 121. Stranger was finally completed in 1960. Heinlein began working on it again in January of 1960, and finished in 46 days. The rough draft was 802 pages, subsequently cut to 612 pages of manuscript.

In re-reading "Archive" in SFR, I discovered a transposition which should be corrected: the story, "Free Men," was opus 44, and The Worlds of Robert A. Heinlein was opus 153.

Concerning "gratuitous slaps," as mentioned in Wendell Simons' letter, SFR 37, I can only say that while my comments on the librarian were possibly interpreted as derogatory, they were certainly not intended to be. Though I still don't know the name of the librarian, she was extremely helpful, appreciative of my interests, and simply a very nice person. In "Archive," my intent was to show the extent that Stranger has been incorporated as an aspect of the "hip" subculture (a pretty unnecessary thing to do in view of recent events), as well as being widely thought of outside fan circles as Heinlein's only important work.

About limiting my comments on the ms of Stranger to brief mention of the difference in "sex" scenes—what more is there to say? The article concerned aspects of Heinlein's work which I thought were not widely known, and there were no other notable differences between the ms and the published work, unless, for some reason, Mr. Simons was interested in the brand of typewriter used. What, exactly was he bitching about?



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93309

SFR has a lot of the attributes I'd like to see OOPSLA! have if I ever revive it—possible though of low probability—so I applaud a lot of your actions as if they were my own.

I like your quality mimeography, your colored fibretone paper (although I prefer to use multicolored issues, not all one hue) and your excellent layout and use of illustrations. A classy fanzine, Geis, one I would be proud to call my own. Your typeface is beautiful, too. As a matter of fact, you may keep me from reviving OOPS. If I can't compete with you—and I can't with my typer and mimeo—then I'll have to wait until I can. Ghu knows when that will be. (You remember Ghu. One of the elder ghods...) Anyway, Dick, you have a number one product

there, even if you do occasionally use words I wouldn't allow in my own family publication. Must be my middle-class morality showing—an unkind person might say my hypocrisy—but there are words, ideas and gestures I find perfectly acceptable in person among small groups that I don't feel comfortable about in print. Maybe that's a good enough reason for others to use them, I don't know. I guess I'm just not that outspoken in public.

That doesn't keep me from stating that you are full of bullshit about the old guard going from FAPA in recent years, though, or denying that your implication that FAPA is no longer hale and hearty is true. True, Tucker finally hung it up, more's the pity—if we had more than 65 memberships I'd be in favor of voting honorary lifetime memberships to guys like Tucker, and in fact, now that I think of it, maybe I'll go ahead with that idea anyway, 65 or no. But a lot of us Old Guarders are as active as ever, and in my case, even more so. (Since I have been a member of FAPA for more than half of the life of the organization I figure I qualify as Old Guard!) As for hale and hearty—hell, we've always been known as the place where old fans go to die. The elephant's graveyard. What's hale and hearty about that? Anyhow, I hope some of your observations are true. I, personally, get a lot of pleasure out of FAPA, and I couldn't care less whether it is strong or weak otherwise. In fact, I don't know exactly what the terms mean. If the membership enjoys the organization, what else matters? As for a minimum number of genzines dominating the field, well, why not? I'd rather see a dozen really enjoyable fanzines than a hundred individual fanzines from one end of the spectrum to another. I admit that is partly selfishness talking. Since I no longer have a fanzine to trade—although happily some kind souls are still willing, like yourself, to accept my FAPazines in lieu of—and really have a mental block about Paying Money for a Fanzine, I can't possibly hope to get most of the current fanzines if they total a large number. On the other hand, if there are only a dozen or so worth making the effort to get, I still have an outside chance. I must admit that you have one extremely interesting point, though—the reentry of the pros into fandom, especially in SFR, is truly remarkable to behold. I don't suppose we've seen as many pro names on fanzine title pages since...when? The '40s?

I have not always been a fan of Ted White's, my feeling sometimes running for and sometimes against, but I must admit that he is a hell of an interesting columnist and I am very much interested in the final results of his bout with AMAZING and FANTASTIC. Sometimes the guy really impresses me. He still comes on occasionally as too defensive and New Yorkish, but I suppose that's to be expected considering his environment. Whups...there I go getting Brunnerish again.

Your reviews are quite interesting. Again, you'll have to read the next THE RAMBLING FAP to appreciate what I mean on this, but let me say now I'd like permission to excerpt from some of your reviews from time to time? Paul Walker, in particular, is highly quotable. ((Okay by me. If any of the reviewers object they'll let you know, I'm sure.)) But, really, I enjoy your reviews, even if they do cover quite a bit

of territory. Your own personal comment, "And Then I Read ..." seemed to suffer a little bit this time by their brevity. You are not quite as colorful as some of your contributors, either—i.e., you don't comment quite so fuggheadedly. Still... Halfway through Stand on Zanzibar I am enjoying it much more than The Jagged Orbit. You are on a different wavelength than mine, though, when you refer to him ((Brunner)) as a 'polished writer." While I think his ideas and conception of a future society are terrific, I find his writing style strictly labor to read except on those occasions when he forgets himself and stops trying to be cute. Is this what they mean by "New Wave"? For instance, as an alternative I offer another story you reviewed with nostalgia in the same column, Iceworld, by Hal Clement. I remember this as a fine, wonder-provoking, truly enjoyable story. The central idea was extremely interesting—an alien point of view, capably expressed by the writer. I don't remember a thing about Clement's writing style. In all, a fine idea told by a storyteller rather than a stylist. Quelle difference!

((But a "storyteller" and a "stylist" are not mutually exclusive...unless you are loading the terms with implied labels—"New Wave"—"Old Wave."—or "formula"—"non-formula".))

You may be interested in knowing that I voted for TAFF for the first time in many years this month. I think Rotsler is a fabulous person and I faunch for his Taffreport. Sad to see how far TAFF has drifted from fanzine fans from those early days when Shelby Vick first persuaded me to put out a special issue for "WAW With the Crew in '52!" Rotsler vs. Shorter and Brown should be a runaway for WR...and would have been in those days, but alas, now...

((Your letter was dated July 1, and you did not then know that Elliot Shorter had won the TAFF trip to Heicon, and by a comfortable margin. It would appear that fanzine fans do not have the voting power of convention fans, and Elliot is primarily a convention fan.

Congratulations to Elliot; he'll make a fine TAFF representative. But I've got to feel that fandom owes Bill Rotsler a TAFF win and/or a Hugo. Maybe next time.))



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Ted White says (SFR #38, p.5), "And Blish was agitating for the use of a column heading his wife had done for his column." In fact, that logo was donated to AMAZING before he came on the scene, and he and I never exchanged one word about it. The fact that it appeared at all (in the first issue to bear his name as editor) shows that he had nothing to do with its acceptance. It bore the line "Conducted by William Atheling, Jr." and the return of the old logo, plus the appearance of two long Ted White reviews I'd never seen, constituted my notification that I was no longer in charge of the column. (In this decision he was, of course, entirely within his rights.)

I viewed Steve Stiles' sequel to Krazy Kat with awe and delight. I wish he'd do a whole lot more—say, about a bookfull. But do I detect a hint that he views the Kat as male?

I'm also glad to see various people rising to speak well of John Campbell. No other editor in the field ever bothered, in the process of rejecting a story (for cause), to write me a four-page, single-spaced letter proposing nearly a hundred aspects of the idea that I hadn't taken into account. The result: Cities in Flight. Like Farmer, I dislike most of his present-day social opinions, but he buys stories not only from people who feel as we do, but which make points opposite to those he believes. This fact, I think, in large part accounts for the position of his magazine on those impressive graphs, no matter how Ted tries to explain it away.

But I don't think Farmer will be able to sell his projected novel. Not even ostoiievsky could make the reader believe that anybody could behave like Dexter Gift and Uppenpriest; in lesser hands Gift would probably turn into a sort of teenage Sammy Glick. (The choice of name leads me to suspect that Farmer has some German.)

Paul Walker's strictures against the Nebula awards are, I agree, pretty thin stuff. Substitute the work "Nobel" for "Nebula" and see how much sense is left. The Nobels, most of them, are given for intellectual achievement (excluding the peace prize), by fellow intellectuals (the Swedish Academy and its advisors). Like the Nebula, it has money value, but its prestige value is still greater. Does it promote clique politics, create dissension and distrust, break up old friendships and taint new ones? Sure, Watson and Crick knew they were in a race with Pauling, and their behaviour under this pressure wasn't entirely to their credit, but as far as I know the three are still speaking to each other. And where in the Nobel system is the inadvertent corruption Walker seems to think almost inevitable? There have been serious errors of both omission and commission in the literature awards (as with the Nebula awards), but not the faintest whiff of corruption since the awards were founded.

The Nebula system has flaws and I have been trying, for years, to get them corrected, but Walker hasn't put his finger on them.

I do think it makes sense to add a Hugo for influence on, and long devotion to, our field, and there is even precedent for it: Asimov was given a Hugo for exactly this reason, not for any specific work, at the Pittcon. Heinlein certainly deserves one, though (also at the Pittcon) he said his wife was getting tired of the ones he then had (two, then). I nominate Lester del Rey; true, he's been a Guest of Honor, but you'll recall that he was honored there by being robbed of his speaking time.



MIKE DECKINGER
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The more Ted White has shifted himself into the editorial field, the more his writing has improved, and his column in SFR

#38 is no exception. He does something that no other pro-zine editor either cares to do, or has the courage to do; he confides to the readers. The editorials in AMAZING and FANTASTIC as well as the letter column replies are a case in point, "The Trenchant Bludgeon" is another. The usual approach among editors is to maintain an atmosphere of formalized secrecy about their magazines and the attendant operations. Minimal space is devoted to an account of the personnel or procedures behind the production of a publication, less is given to the economic interplay involved in keeping the publication functioning. Ted's willingness to share his own experiences with what many editors have viewed as an indifferent readership is most refreshing. And while he doesn't make Sol Cohen seem saintly he succeeds in removing him from the morass of innuendo and vindictiveness that I've always seen directed towards him. Cohen's motives, and therefore his actions are made considerably more reasonable by Ted's column.

I've become so accustomed to the universal writer's credo that authorship is a back-breaking, tiresome, seldom enjoyable occupation, that I'm delighted to see John Brunner offer a solemn repudiation of this cliché. Brunner is that rare and lucky animal, the individual who truly enjoys what he does for a living, and manages to do it exceedingly well. I've enjoyed all I've read by Brunner, probably a tribute to the concern he directs towards the finished product. Let's take the many writers who say they don't enjoy their profession; is this lack of satisfaction reflected in their work? Or is like or dislike of the task totally immaterial to the worth of the final product?

((The only way to find out is to examine the writing of a writer during a period when he says he loves his work and contrast it with his output when he says he hates it...if you can find such a writer...and if you believe him both times....and if his experience and skills are approximately the same in both periods. Sounds difficult. Let's forget it.))

Paul Walker argues a strained interpretation of the term "hack". Despite the lofty aspirations he tacks on it, I have never seen the word "hack" writer used in any but a most uncomplimentary sense. Rather than labelling Poul Anderson under his rightful definition, Paul is adapting the term to fit the man, softening the blow of "hack" by applying it to corresponding virtues that are totally out of place. I can not under any circumstances conceive of Poul Anderson as a "hack" writer, anymore than I can picture John Steinbeck, Mark Twain or F. Scott Fitzgerald as "hacks". I'm not sure what word Paul is searching for but "hack" it is not.

WILLIAM F. TEMPLE
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UNITED KINGDOM

Your persistence in sending me SFR in the face of what must seem like my equally persistent ungrateful silence is a touching example of faith in action. I'm not ungrateful —far from it. I relish SFR. I've

not even been silent—in my fashion. Between the pages of each of the issues heaped on my desk is a sheet of comments I made as I read it. Each sheet was meant to serve as a basis for a Loc. Too seldom did it fulfil its purpose. The fault lies way back—circa 4004 B.C., when God twirled our globe a mite too vigorously, sent it spinning too fast, allowed us only 24 instead of 48 hours in each day. I meant to get around to those letters—but succeeded only in exceeding the speed limit along that road to Hell which is paved with good intentions.

So here I sit with a sheaf of notes so far outdated that even you wouldn't remember the issues debated in the issues. The merits of Dune, e.g., which has sprung from its loins a Messianic sequel in the interim. Only the other day I called on a local fan-friend, Ray Denton, who edits a fanzine, STING, and spotted on his shelves Dune with a bookmark stuck in just the same place where I too had temporarily shelved Dune. Doubtless we'll both return to it—Arthur Clarke, on the backcover, can't be all that wrong. And the Hugo and the Nebula Awards... And there's much that's right: it's a striking piece of imaginative writing. But I kept stumbling over the dialog. Everyone keeps hissing sentences containing no sibilants, e.g., "Do it!" the Emperor hissed. "Remember the tooth!" Yueh hissed. "The tooth!" (Well, maybe Yueh hissed.) After more of which I came upon: "Ever sift sand through a sieve?" she asked. (!)

At which point I inserted the bookmark. Did also James Blish (that well-known book-sadist) I wonder? ((I was tempted to type that 'book-sadist'.))

I quoted these samples to Forry and Wendayne Ackerman, when they were staying with us 3 weeks ago. They were amused—but remained pro-Herbert nevertheless. Incidentally, I showed the Ackermans, and Dave Kyle, around Spade House here—the house H. G. Wells built here in 1899 and wherein in the subsequent decade he wrote some of his best s-f. Moreover, I helped to arrange that Forry and Wendy sleep a night in H.G.'s own bedroom there, before speeding them on by air from Lympne (where Wells's Cavor and Bedford took off for the Moon in The First Men in the Moon) to Paris.

I'm falling over backwards to be kind to visiting Americans these days because it's still on my conscience how unkind I was to two other visiting Americans, Don Wollheim and John W. Campbell, Jr., at a World-Con in London some years back. I'd made up my mind to be abrasive to both. Don, after taking three of my novels for Ace, had turned down another two for what seemed to me insufficient reasons. One of them was downbeat—everyone died in the end. Ace, like all American publishers, hates downbeat. Which is why my ever-lamented late friend, Arthur Sellings, who was too much alive ever to be thought of as dead, can't hope to sell over there his posthumpus novel, Junk Day, despite its fine writing. The



British have a soft spot for gallant failures, as Arthur's hero was. ("Well tried, old man!") Scott of the Antarctic is one of our gallant failures—and a hero. He could never be a hero in the States—he failed. You wouldn't have accepted Scott Fitzgerald as a hero (as you have) if he hadn't first proved himself a resounding dollar-earning success before his so-called decline. (Even though all the time he wrote the pants off his friend/rival, Hemingway, who in the end gave up in suicide, which Fitzgerald never did—he was writing his best on his death-bed.)

Nevertheless, I was wrong—professionally. I shouldn't have written a downbeat yarn for Ace, knowing it was against house policy. Ace would never have published HAMELET for the same reason: too many corpses around when the curtain fell (never mind what the story was trying to say). And house policy must be respected by the commercial author. Americans won't buy downbeat. So why should an author expect an advance on royalties that will never materialize?

As for the second fiasco—Don was right again. I'd tried to cram just too many hard-to-swallow ideas (although all based on fact) into one short book. They were too densely crowded to be able to breathe the breath of life. Wild, too wild, he said. When I received the MS back and re-read it, I realized how right he was. Even I strained over that cloud of gnats.

So I foolishly made an enemy of Don Wollheim (one of the warmest fens I've ever met) on the same day that I alienated Campbell, who'd accepted a couple of my yarns for ANALOG, but wished me to change the locale of another. "Coco-Talk," which I'd set on Venus. Campbell believed that the first Russian probe had "proved" that Venus was too hot for sentient life. I asked him if he'd had a divine revelation about conditions on Venus. His hackles rose to the ceiling. I'd made another enemy. (I'm much too good at this sort of thing.) He gave me figures and what seemed to be facts about that Russian probe. I doubted them. A second probe has shown them to be 50% wrong. A further probe might show them to be 100% wrong—or might not. But he didn't know any more than I did. But again I'd bucked house policy. Worse, I'd been bloody rude, and to a guest. This was unforgivable, and I'm unforgiven, I suspect. "Coco-Talk" has sold three times over since, which proves nothing except that some folks weren't hypercritical.

In SFR #36 Brian Aldiss remarked on the egocentricity of John Brunner. Brunner is egocentric. So is Arthur Clarke. So is Wally Gillings. I've known them for years, and renewed acquaintance with all three at the SCI-CON 70. They're the three most egocentric characters I've encountered in s-f. Each of them has a perfect right to be thus. Their record in print bears testimony to it, and they've no need to underline it, although they do. As for Aldiss himself, I can't claim to know him personally. He did tell me once that he began writing s-f because he bought an issue of NEBULA with a cover story of mine in it and decided that he could write better stuff than anything in that is-

sue. Maybe he was right. I thought his early work was great. Obviously, so did he. I'd take a chance and nominate him as the Fourth Musketeer, ego-wise.

I seem to be using the first person singular overmuch myself. But then, browsing through the letter-col. of SFR, I reflect—don't we all?

((Regarding Ace and its supposed "no downbeat" policy—that might apply to the Ace Doubles line, but after reading Mark Geston's Lords of the Starship and Out of the Mouth of the Dragon, replete with nihilism, despair, futility, death... I doubt it applies to all Ace sf, and I'm sure Terry Carr would deny it concerning the Specials.))



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The latest SFR is by far the best you've done for many months. I think we must thank Ted White for that; he has brought back the all-important sense of the ludicrous to your pages.

I refer, obviously, to Ted's capacity for self-delusion. If he believed he was Napoleon, we would be unsurprised to find him in a mental institution; as it is, he believes he is the editor of a flourishing science fiction magazine, yet for some reason is allowed to walk the streets freely, as if a sane man.

Despite the fact that ANALOG gained almost 20,000 readers since 1966, while FANTASTIC lost 10,000; despite the fact that in '69 ANALOG's sales were almost four times those of FANTASTIC; that ANALOG's market-slice was seven times the size of FANTASTIC's; that FANTASTIC now sells fewer copies than any other science fiction magazine... Despite all this, Ted laughs at figures and seems sincerely convinced, that all sf magazines are equally badly off; that if they all had equally good distribution they would sell equally well (a classic and common fantasy of the small-magazine editor); that ANALOG's seemingly large circulation is not what it seems because, for reasons unguessable, they are supposed to indulge in totally unprofitable subscription offers; and that Ted's policy of making FANTASTIC comprehensible only to die-hard science fiction fans is likely to boost sales in months to come.

It has now become clear that the opposite is the case, and that Campbell, by making his magazine accessible to readers not from the fannish backwater, showed more shrewdness than any other editor, and transformed ANALOG into a resounding success—without the money or the goodwill of the vocal minority who write the 100 letters a month which Ted is so excited about, at FANTASTIC.

Active science fiction fans are obviously insufficient in number to support a magazine on their own; and a magazine with a policy of amateurishness, banality and in-group cliche in its features and editorial departments is unlikely to appeal much to those outside the fannish clique. This should be obvious to anyone, as should the fact that FANTASTIC is a doom-

ed and dying magazine being driven under at an accelerating rate by Ted White's apparent insanity. While Campbell (if we are to believe Ted's gossip) draws \$20,000 a year, White wastes his time writing drivel for fanzines and complaining of his peverty. Surely, there is a simple and clear message to be seen in this contrast between the professional and the amateur.

FANTASTIC magazine, RIP.

((Charles, in person you are a sweet, even-tempered guy; when your fingers touch the keys of a typer with intent to write a letter of comment you apparently become a pure fugghead. I don't know why, but there it is.

I was talking on the phone a few moments ago with Phil Farmer and he mentioned that you had written him a letter just received in which you said you had written me a satirical letter for SFR. But even as satire the above letter is pretty distorted.

Your article this issue, "An Editor's Day" is a delight and to your credit. This letter, even viewed as satire, is the opposite.))



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Concerning Ted White's "The
Trenchant Bludgeon" column in SFR
38.

White, in BEABOHEMA 9, chides Frank Lunney for sticking his nose in SFWA business. He tells Lunney, gently enough, that until Lunney sells a story and becomes a member of SFWA, its business will remain none of his business.

Having reprimanded Lunney thus, and thus implying that SFWA business should be confined to SFWA publications, Ted White writes a long letter about the SFWA and the relationships of its members with Sol Cohen of Ultimate (AMAZING/FANTASTIC and God knows how many special reprint issues). This is the column in SFR 38, a non-SFWA 'zine.

I agree with White. SFWA business should not be described, or discussed, in a fanzine. Not by SFWA members. But I must make an exception just this once, because too many might be inclined to credit at least some of White's accusations. And, having replied, I will say no more of this matter outside of SFWA publications.

White, contrary to his usual policy, avoids naming names in his article. He calls various members of the SFWA "cheap, double-dealing blackmailers" and accuses them of "moral bankruptcy" and of being "moral hypocrites." (For one thing, what other kind of hypocrite is there?) He names no names and does so, I suppose, to avoid law suits or a poke in the nose. Or to avoid arousing his antagonists so much they'll lose all their cool and ask White, in print, to explain a certain incident in which he was involved approximately a year ago. I doubt that anyone will do so. I wouldn't, and even White's bitterest enemies (of whom I am not one, contrary to appearances) will not do so,

despite the greatest provocation. But White must be made to realize that he lives in a glass house, that he is in no position to throw the first stone. Or the second, either.

White says that we authors sold second rights to Ziff-Davis and so have no cause of complaint. I'll concede that some authors did, myself among these. When Ziff-Davis bought three stories from me (in Cele Goldsmith's day), I never saw the contracts. My agent (of that time) transacted the sales, kept the contracts in his file (I presume), and sent me a check with commission deducted. I had no idea I was selling more than first North American serial rights. The same thing happened to Bob Bloch, and I imagine, to many others whose agents didn't inform or protect them.

A del Rey or Silverberg would sneer at such naivete, ignorance, unbusinesslike attitude, etc. I don't blame them. I should have asked my agent about rights, just as he should have asked me if I wanted to sell second serial rights. But I just never thought about such things in those days, being isolated in the Midwest and also being a part-time writer who loathes business details. But I've learned since then. Many of us have.

So, when Cohen started his reprint policy, and I became involved, and I found out that I had sold second serial rights, I accepted it. Too bad, but that's the way it was. I'd have to pay the penalty of my oversight. Perhaps I wouldn't have been so agreeable if I'd had more than three stories reprinted.

I joined the SFWA the second year of its existence, I believe. And then only because a still-anonymous donor purchased a membership for me. Damon Knight had called for the boycott, and then, in August, 1967, the famous (or infamous) SFWA-Ultimate agreement was announced. This will be referred to as the S-Ua after this.

If you'll read the S-Ua, you'll find nothing in it about having to write a polite letter to Cohen requesting payment for reprints. In fact, from the 2nd para. of the S-Ua, "Where Ultimate is unable to locate an author, it will turn the check over to SFWA, which will then initiate an author search." According to an SFWA official, Ultimate has never tried to locate the author of a reprint with the idea of giving him a check for such. And many of us authors know from experience that Ultimate makes no attempt to locate the author of a reprinted story. Far from it. Many of us, clearly eligible for payment according to the S-Ua, and having notified Ultimate of such, have been ignored. I only got paid, after a long time, because I made a nuisance of myself.

It's true that some people have gotten paid relatively quickly after their stories were reprinted. But these are exceptions, and I don't doubt the exceptions were made for business or amical reasons and as showcases. It took me almost a year to get Cohen to admit that my story had even been reprinted. Then he tried all sorts of dodges, including making up new rules. I wrote to the SFWA, which queried him about these new rules, and he dropped them quickly. White says that it was he, not Cohen, who made the decision to pay me, so from this I can safely suppose that Cohen would never

have paid me if he hadn't been pushed by White. Score one for Mr. White who doesn't care for me personally but was probably angry at Cohen for what he had done to Roger Zelazny. (See my SFWA Forum letter for details.)

In fact, my letters in the two SFWA Forums and the addenda therein may be reprinted by you, Dick Geis, if you care to. ((The SFWA Forum is copyrighted and prohibits any reprinting, even, I suspect, if an individual writer gives permission.)) These contain specifics, not vague accusations, and can't be refuted. If Cohen has since made any payments to the people I mention in these letters, it is because of the letters, and the charges are true as of the time they were made.

My letters show that Cohen has consistently broken the S-Ua in letter and spirit. The cases I present are only a small part of the evidence. The SFWA files, I have been assured by an SFWA official, contain a mountainous pile of such.

White has no basis whatsoever for screaming, "Conceited Asses! Moral bankruptcy! Injustice!" and etcetera. He knows he doesn't. He's been privy too long to the shaftings of many, including some of his best friends. And this shafting of friend or foe is still going on. Only last week I got two complaints that Cohen had ignored requests for payment for reprints (due according to the S-Ua).

By the way, White's remark about Ultimate purchasing first NA or first World serial rights, depending upon the author's desires, was not my experience. No one asked me my choice when White purchased a new story from me. I refused to cash my agent's check until he had assured me that Cohen had purchased first NA serial rights only. So I have learned. But no one asked me what I wanted.

I may be a conceited ass (as White implies anyone who wants to be paid for his reprints according to the S-Ua is). But if I am a conceited ass, I know a far greater, one who brays loudly and frequently of his own great editorial genius and near-papal infallibility.

But I hasten to say that, in my opinion, White is an extremely good editor and may even be a great one someday. There's no denying that he has done a marvelous job with AMAZING/FANTASTIC.

I deny that I am trying to kill off these two magazines. I am not vindictive, nor am I a cheap double-dealing blackmailer. (Nor am I an embezzler.) I made no protests until after the S-Ua and after I found out, accidentally, that one of my stories had been reprinted. After long trouble and labor, I got Cohen to tell me the dates of two other stories of mine that had been reprinted also. I don't know why he was so reluctant to tell me, since he wasn't liable under the S-Ua to pay me, they having been reprinted before the S-Ua. He could have saved both of us much time and worry if he'd given me the dates the first time around.

The main point of all this furore about Cohen is: Is Cohen breaking the S-Ua? The answer: He has and is consist-

ently breaking it. All White's hysterical shriekings and accusations can't hide that.

If Cohen had refused to sign the agreement, he would have been legally within his rights, and you'd never have heard a peep from me. But, once he signed, he opened the Pandora's box. In fact, my investigations led me to Mr. Williams, who sent me copies of letters from former Ziff-Davis officials. These indicated that Cohen had reprinted a large number of stories which had been sold to Ziff-Davis for first serial rights only. Mr. Williams had tried to get SFWA officials interested in these in the early days of the SFWA (when Knight was no longer president). Williams was brushed off then, but the present administration is aware of them.

My letter in the latest SFWA Forum calls for a second boycott of Ultimate. But if Cohen and the SFWA officials would confer, and a system could be set up to assure that Cohen did live up to the S-Ua (presently and retroactively), no shenanigans, then I'd be in favor of no boycott. I agree with White that the goose (a curious way for him to refer to his boss) shouldn't be killed. We artist's need all the markets we can get, even Cohen's reduced-rate counter (which may improve someday). But it's up to Cohen and the SFWA to arrange this. I can't speak for other writers on this matter, of course.

White may be right when he says Cohen is no monster and is a kindly, charitable man. But these points are irrelevant. The issue is: Did Cohen break the S-Ua?

White also says that Cohen always pays promptly for new material. But Cohen has owed Norman Spinrad money for his book review of Stand On Zanzibar for about a year.

White calls those who want to be paid according to the S-Ua the various names I've listed. In doing this, he also accuses anyone who has been paid of being a "moral hypocrite" (love that redundancy), a "cheap, double-dealing blackmailer," etc. This includes Silverberg and Ellison and Rocklin and some others. The only difference between these and the others is that one was paid. But both groups wanted payment for reprints. There is also a third group. Those who haven't requested payment because they don't know their stories have been reprinted or those who don't feel it's worthwhile to request, knowing the little money they'll get—if they get it, which is doubtful.

White has been making many accusations of dishonesty lately. He accuses Ellison and Blish of intellectual dishonesty, and he accuses Ellison of "selling out to the Establishment." These accusations are so preposterous that I doubt even White believes in them. He has also written a letter to LOCUS (if my information is correct) in which he accuses two men, a highly esteemed old-time s-f author, and a prominent fan, of embezzling funds. The letter was not published because the accusees read it first and threatened suit. Why all these charges of dishonesty? Is White unconsciously trying to provoke a reaction which would result in his being exposed as the pot calling the kettle black? Does he unconsciously want to be punished?

Several small points. In his third-to-last para. White

says, "We dropped the reprints." The Sept. 1970 AMAZING contains a Miles J. Breuer story. And White says, re AMAZING/FANTASTIC, "And of course we turned the corner with the 60¢ issue." Turn to page 18 of the same issue and note that, "Sales on both AMAZING and FANTASTIC fell with their first 60¢ issue." The author of this contradictory statement? Ted White.

White says, "They've (they being the SFWA writers) learned that if you throw a big enough tantrum, you can usually impose your will on others, regardless of the rights in the case."

In the next paragraph, White throws a tantrum that is a disgrace to the editor of the oldest s-f magazine, to its publisher, to the magazine, to the members of SFWA, and to the readers of SFR. His is the hysterical and childishly defiant cry of the guilty projecting his own guilt on others.

The "spotlight" reveals White caught red-handed.

Concerning Delap's review of my three Essex House books in SFR 37. There's not much you can say to this kind of criticasting. It's all too vague and obviously written in a mindless frenzy. Delap did, however, make one specific example of my "hackery" as he so kindly calls it. This is that point at which he claims that a man opening the door to a roomful of water couldn't have yelled loudly enough to be heard by the man inside the room. Now, it is clearly stated that Childe's head is above the water, since he's sitting on top of the canopy of the bed. And, since the top of the door was not covered, there would have been a channel of air between the man outside and Childe inside. It is my contention that Childe could have heard the cry. I clearly stated that the cry was cut off, and this, of course, would have been when the man outside was swept away. When I wrote that scene, I stood by the door of my bedroom, visualizing a watertight bedroom of great extent. I even opened the door and imagined what would happen. There would be a second in which the man's cry could travel over the water to Childe's ears. Then the roar, and the sweeping away of the man, would cut off the cry.

If this mental rehearsing is an example of hackery, then I'm a Martian. (I often wish I were.)

Piers Anthony hits it on the nose when he suggests that White/Delap lack the ability to appreciate certain types of fiction and they should disqualify themselves from reviewing such.

Maybe I should write a column for you called "The Steam Room." But you know my time is limited, and it's only when I get riled up that I write. Once I break that bad habit, no more letters. Unless you can pay at least two cents a word.

((I wish I could pay myself two cents a word.))

I just thought of a story in which conditions have changed so much that writers can make a living just by con-

tributing to fanzines.

I'll alter Swedo's suggestion slightly. Your publication should be called SCIENCE FICTION WRITER'S INDIGEST.

((A sickening suggestion.))

And Delap's comment about Piers' "peering roaches" is invalid. Sure, roaches can peer. Piers could have said they "looked," but he wanted a stronger word, one that suggested their caution before they darted out to snatch crumbs or whatever snatches they had in mind.

((I have the vague impression that roaches "see" by means of their antennas or feelers and react to sound and smell... Umm...is there a cockroach out there among the readership who can enlighten us?

"Hey, Geis, I know one called archy who writes—" Go hide in a crevice, Alter!))

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Upon receiving my SFR 38, I flipped it open to the middle and was immediately zapped by that nauseously familiar line: "And that is what is wrong with women writers!" Hurrah for smug, blanket condemnations.

Paul Walker, in his supposed review of The Ship Who Sang, attacks his mother, Anne McCaffrey and human females in general for what he calls "a woman's inclination for detail." Many women, because of the minutiae and routine of housework are involuntarily caught in this thinking pattern. People leading confined, detail-oriented lives usually do have confined, detail-obsessed minds; but not all women lead such lives or possess such minds. Particularly not women who are good, creative writers. (See Virginia Woolfe, A Room of One's Own, for a brilliant analysis of the obstacles past and present to female creativity.) The details of The Ship Who Sang no more ruin the novel than the details of Dune ruin that outstanding example of a male's ability for meticulous detail. I've yet to hear Herbert denounced for "writing like a woman," and quite a few male "slobs" seem enchanted by its design.

As for reviewers willing to substitute sexual classification for literate criticism...I heard in this review, slightly disguised, the manly pronouncement that has muddied too many parties and discussions I've attended, i.e.: "I don't read women writers because they write like women." To all such incompetent critics I quote a passage out of context from Ted White's "The Trenchant Bludgeon":

"Fuck them all, each and every one. They are...hypocrites. I think it's time the spotlight is shown on them for a change."

((Of course you are right. Ursula K. LeGuin is an outstanding current example of a woman who does not "write like a woman." But there is a subtle "soapy" style that some women writers do use...or which is natural to them...which causes all this hassle. It turns off a lot of male reviewers and readers.))

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Do you ever, by any slight chance,
read CRAWDADDY (no, you wouldn't)?
It's a tabloid for rock freaks which
really doesn't publish much about rock.

In the Vol. IV, number 4 there is an interesting article
entitled "Celestialization of Harold Shea" by Pg Wyal.
That sounds like a pseudonym to me. Anyway, the author
brings out a point for discussion. He says:

Observe: The strange tendency to tell a childish
tale in grown-up terms, or an adult parable in the
words of children. How is it that Heinlein gets
away, constantly, with putting a juvenile label on
his interplanetary intrigues?—little wonders like
Between Planets, where the concepts, as well as the
terms they're put in, are astronomical. Arthur C.
Clarke's supreme Lunar revolt story, Earthlight
(which I think is being filmed by Kubrick, finally)
whose precept is "Treason is only a matter of dat-
es," and whose conclusion confirms its precept, was
issued under the Ballantine Bal-Hi banner...and in-
tended for kids—twelve-year-olds! Is it any sur-
prise that this generation bases its revolution on
the idea that all laws are, like physical phenom-
ena, relative to all that goes into the need for
laws? That societies, as well as planetary eco-
spheres, are ecological systems?...How is it that a
physical ecologically aware novel like Dune can be
politically asinine?...How many fans take Paul
Atreides' maudlin crusade seriously—beyond the
sphere of fiction and into real life?

Later on the author somehow compares Pratt & de Camp's
works with Mein Kampf. I think, however, the most import-
ant thing that the writer said was that all laws are rela-
tive (to the need for them in any particular society).
The Second Revolution is perhaps only the resurrection of
the Romanticism movement; that is, the rejection of so many
ideals that are taken for granted by the Establishment.
Today, dope usage, fornication, sodomy, homophilism, etc.
is much more acceptable than it used to be. According to
the ethics of the Counterculture, these things are accept-
able to one degree or another.

People say "murder is wrong." Of course, it's wrong.
But I can say that because it is in violation of my own
personal morality. It is not in the society in which I
dwell. Oh, perhaps to a limited extent, it is, but, ap-
parently it doesn't apply to Black Panthers (especially
those living in Chicago) or college students or South
Vietnamese civilians.

Clearly, one's personal code is more important, if tak-
en in toto; than that of the society in which he lives.
For, whereas society doesn't always decide an individual's
own morality, the overriding morality of an entire people
does decide that of the society. Witness Nazi Germany. If
the German people had been repulsed by the treatment of
the Jews, Hitler would not have been able to carry out his
anti-Semite campaign. At the end of WW II, a GI showed the
picture of slaughter which had taken place in one of the

concentration camps to a young German girl. At first the girl
was shocked, then her face showed relief. She said, "Oh, but
they're only Jews." So...

((I doubt if adult elements in juvenile sf are responsible
for the current Counterculture/Rebellion. I do think it
traces back to television, somehow.

Peoples have always de-humanized their enemies and scape-
goats to make their killing easier. All groups do it, large
and small, whether their killing is real or psychological or
literary.))



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In his review of Carter's Giant
at World's End (SFR 38) John Boardman
says of Robert E. Howard that his
"letters and privately expressed

thoughts...leave the uncomfortable impression impression that
had he survived until World War II, his name would be under-
the same obloquy as those of Knut Hamsun and Wyndham Lewis."
The implication is that Howard was on the way to becoming a
Nazi or Fascist sympathizer.

Howard's political opinions are not very important: first,
because he never became a profound or mature political think-
er before his suicide at thirty; second, because a man's opin-
ions in his twenties are not a safe presage of his later views.
(When I was an undergraduate in the 1920s, I was for a while
a vociferous adherent of the "poor Germany" school. I learn-
ed better.) Still, liking to keep records straight and hav-
ing read the writings by and about Howard in some detail, I
think I am qualified to amend John's speculation.

In "Robert Ervin Howard: A Memoriam," Howard's pen pal
Lovecraft described him as "a liberal in politics, and a bit-
ter foe of civic injustice in every form." When Lovecraft ex-
pressed admiration for Mussolini, Howard took strenuous ex-
ception. Along with this anti-authoritarian bent, Howard al-
so mixed other diverse and often incompatible elements: some
of the romantic primitivism of Jack London (who managed to
combine racism with left-wing Socialism), some Nietzschean
supermanism, and some pseudo-scientific Aryanism. All these
ideas were widespread in the United States in the twenties.
He also had the conventional white Southern attitude towards
Negroes. There is evidence from his writings that this last,
while strong when he started writing in his teens, abated as
he got older, as did Lovecraft's xenophobia towards Jews,
Slavs, and Latins.

Speculating as to how anybody would have developed had he
lived longer is as fruitless as argument over how Lincoln
would have handled Reconstruction, or Kennedy Vietnam. More-
over, a man may profess soberly rational ideas at one time
and embrace the goofiest cult at another. But, while it is
unlikely that Howard would ever have become a civil-rights
activist, it is perfectly possible to imagine his growing in-
to a fairly conventional establishmentarian liberal, as many
of his contemporaries did.



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Ted White has commented on Jerry Kidd's article on pro magazine circulations; I can add some corrections to the story.

1. ANALOG has no—count 'em, zero!—bargain-rate subscription offers. We do not have any special school rates, or work through any of the subscription-promotion houses. The only source of ANALOG subscriptions is from ads in ANALOG itself; every subscriber starts as a newsstand buyer, because that's the only way he gets to see an ad for a subscription. And they all pay the standard subscription price. ANALOG gets just about as much return from subscriptions as from newsstand sales. That's the only way we could afford to pay the prices we do for manuscripts and art work.

2. ANALOG is a Conde-Nast publication; Conde-Nast is a great fashion house; it is not a charitable institution. They don't support magazines that don't pay their own way—and a fashion house most certainly wouldn't waste time, effort and money supporting something as far out in left field, so far as their business is concerned, as a science-fiction magazine. Believe me, ANALOG is not a "marginal" operation; it pays its way and pays its taxes.

3. Currently, we have more full-paid subscriptions than we had total circulation in 1940. And circulation is growing.

4. Jerry Kidd reports that most of the "fans" he talked to did not like me, and did not like ANALOG, but remarkably, ANALOG is far ahead in circulation.

This result comes from a definition of "fans"; if the term is interpreted as "a regular reader of science-fiction", then, evidently, Jerry Kidd's sample of fans was poorly chosen, since it doesn't indicate what the readers actually like.

If "fan" means "a member of the active group of professional fans who edit fan magazines, arrange conventions, and form the in-group known as Fandom", then his poll of their opinions may indeed be correct.

Unfortunately, that small in-group lacks numbers sufficient to support a healthy magazine, pay authors and artists, and get distribution.

Apparently, the group large enough to support a healthy magazine has somewhat different tastes. As a practicing pragmatist, I am forced to bow to their wishes, since I want ANALOG to be healthy.

I don't demand that everybody should like what ANALOG runs—but that all classes of fans should at least recognize that a professional magazine must satisfy a sufficient group of people to support it. The in-group fans simply do not constitute a sufficiently large group.

UNKNOWN died largely because despite the very intense interest of its fans—there weren't enough to make it possible to support the publication after the war. Costs had gone up so much that what was a barely profitable operation in 1939 would have been a losing proposition by 1945.

I need to keep ANALOG healthy.

STEVE GRANDI
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Your comments in the Dialog of #38 about fans becoming consumers rather than contributors has driven me to actually sit down and write you a LOC (my first one ever—so be prepared). ((I am humble and proud that you gave your fannish virginity to SFR.))

I knew nothing of fanzines or fandom until I answered one of your ads in IF about a year-and-a-half ago. The spectacle of fandom as presented in your letter column and in the articles was interesting and informative, but I felt no urge to get involved: I mean, what could I write that could compare to Harlan Ellison's vivid prose in his battle with Pierce and the Second Foundation? I enjoy SFR vastly, and I have enjoyed the other fanzines I have come in contact with, but I have enjoyed them for the same reason that I enjoy reading the letter column in a prozine, for example, because of its relation to the actual reading of SF stories. That's the reason I believe SFR has such an appeal, it is directed not just toward the fans but toward the non-fan SF reader as well. Such articles as the ones by Jerry Kidd and Ted White in SFR #38 illustrate my point.

Good God—could you call us the Silent Majority of Fandom?

((Yes, you could...but I would not want to be the one who identified the Effete Snobs of Fandom.))



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No doubt people have written you about 'Sci-Fi'? The term (a pun on Hi-Fi) was coined, I believe, in the early '50s by Forrest J. Ackerman and was to have been the title of a magazine he was to edit but which, unfortunately, never materialized. Anyway, it was never heard in the '30s and '40s. I recall that in the LASFS, in the middle and late '40s, science fiction was most often called just that, but that "scientifiction" and "stef" were frequently used, even by such younger members as myself. (And I recall how disgusted some of the older members were when a visitor, William Campbell Gault, was scornful of "scientifiction"—I sound as if I were going into competition with Harry Warner, Jr. as fan historian, don't I?) For some reason, Sci-Fi caught on in the entertainment industry. Everyone I've heard use it was someone, like Forrest or Bill Nolan, who was (if you will forgive me) Show Biz-oriented.

You have gotten together a fine crew of reviewers. I like Paul Walker. I suppose he's young. I hope so, at least.

((I would guess that 'Sci-Fi' is used in show biz and writing allied to TV, movies, etc. for its short, self-explanatory utility. It also has a condescending sneer built into it as used by newspaper and glossy magazine writers.))



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I am interested in Ted's "Comment" on Jerry Kidd's article on sf magazine circulation in SFR 38. Here Ted gives us further information on the profit-making potential of all the sf magazines; he offers some fascinating insights. But I am particularly diverted here by Ted's remarks about ANALOG, which (as he shows) is a relatively lavish project, with high word- and artwork-rates for the sf field, a big editorial budget, and heavy production costs. And yet, as Ted says, ANALOG—at least according to "educated speculation"—is "probably only marginally profitable, and may not outlast its present editor."

I'm sure that Ted is right. ANALOG is a curious apple. Here it is, Campbell's personal little journal, his fanzine. Increasingly it has functioned primarily as his mouthpiece and only secondarily as a display case for fiction that often reflects his prejudices. ANALOG certainly espouses some mighty peculiar notions: crackpotty, reactionary, elitist ones. Why is such a magazine published so unflinchingly, month after month, when magazines devoted more obviously to entertainment, fall by the wayside? ANALOG is an anomaly at Conde Nast—and a somewhat expensive one at that.

ANALOG is so idiosyncratic that it would hardly seem likely that such a magazine would appeal to any canny publisher. It seems hardly calculated to appeal to a really wide audience, any more than I.F. STONE'S WEEKLY or THE REALIST is. It's aimed deliberately at a limited audience, and doesn't even worry about alienating the more liberal and and individualistic elements of that. Certainly, if making it popular and profitable were the main consideration, the publisher would fire Campbell and find an editor who wouldn't turn off so many people every issue. Consider the Black outrage at Campbell's editorial, "A Difference of Intelligence," in ANALOG, October 1969, for example.

((ANALOG was and is slanted to appeal to the scientific community, to the aero-space engineers and to NASA employees. I can't help wondering what the recent and continuing cut-back in aero-space employment is doing to ANALOG's circulation. Perhaps Jerry Kidd can be persuaded to update his graphs next year for the readers of SFR. Hint, hint...))



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To Barry Malzberg's countdown on ANALOG add me. I'm not prolific—fewer than a hundred stories in 30 years—but I'm steady. Yet never have I sold to ASTOUNDING/ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION/ANALOG. After rejection of my 25th anniversary submission to JWCJr., later accepted elsewhere as was every other such reject, I gave up on him.

I see by the Sept. '70 AMAZING "ClubHouse" that SFR is no longer recommended. Permit me to differ. After I've

read an issue of SFR I send it to the people at the Syracuse University Library; there it's added to the science fiction collections and preserved in, as they say, perpetuity. And deserves to be.

((The aspect of John Berry's review of SFR that struck me as strange was its high emotional content; it was as if he felt outraged that SFR was no longer PSYCHOTIC. The unrequited love syndrome? He complained: "Ten pages of book reviews? Are you kidding? I haven't read any of them, nor do I intend to." So, out of hand, he refuses to read them, prejudging violently. Yet some book reviews can be as interesting and informative as any other form of writing. He could have as easily condemned novels, short stories, articles... And, of course, he violated the prime rule of the reviewer...to judge an effort on obvious intent and function. Ten pages of book reviews in a magazine dedicated to sf and titled SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW seems appropriate, but John wants the magazine to be something else and in the heat of his emotion, objectivity lost out.

Well, on to Piers Anthony, who is feeling the same way about a review.))



PIERS ANTHONY
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I'd like to quote all of Alexander Pope's "An Essay on Criticism" (published in 1711), but must give only the briefest selections.

Thus:
'Tis hard to say if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill;
But of the two, less dang'rous is the offense
To tire our patience than mislead our sense:
...
Let such teach others who themselves excel,
And censure freely, who have written well.
Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true;
But are not critics to their judgement, too?
...
In search of wit these lose their common sense,
And then turn critics in their own defense;
...
Some have at first for wits, then poets passed,
Turned critics next, and proved plain fools at last.

Small wonder so few writers are critics, and vice versa! I disagree that a person must excel in order to teach others—possibly the opposite in more nearly true—but I do prefer my fiction while doing some criticizing of the works of other writers, and I do stand by both endeavors here in the fanzines. Thus my accreditation, such as it may be, is plainly displayed in both camps. Likewise Ted White, James Blish, Richard Geis, Dean Koontz, in the fanzines, and another handful in the prozines whom I don't count because the fannish interaction is missing. Sometimes this interaction is negative, as in the case of one bad sport who sent his complaints about Geis and Anthony not to SFR, where my review of his book appeared, but to YANDRO, while informing SFR he would not comment. Well, Pope pretty well covers him;

I'm not responsible for the limitations of the critics of my criticisms!

At any rate, I propose now to delve into the morass of criticizing the critics, with all that implies. But because I really am cutting down on fan activity, I'm lumping all the comments on Macroscopic I have seen in scattered fanzines into one, and I hope I can refrain from subsequent comment on this subject. I waited for the Delap review in SFR for several reasons: (1) SFR is the leading fanzine today, and so is the logical place for one definitive comment; (2) I participate regularly in SFR bone-crunching (the only other place I do that is BE A BOHEMA); (3) Richard Delap is, as these things go, a friend of mine. That last is most important. You see, in the normal course a friend will give you a favorable review, and an unfriend an unfavorable review, so these are of dubious critical value. When an unfriend is favorable, I take notice; and when a friend is unfavorable it is very likely to be truth. Delap is the only fan I know of to directly bring about a sale of an unpublished novel—Hasan—by a fan review, so what he says does have a certain impact. And his review of Macroscopic is negative.

I regret that the review is a disappointment. Because it is derogatory, of course; naturally I prefer praise. But more important, because it says very little that is useful, and is too obviously over-cute, with its interjections of "hoo-ray" and "hoo-pant!-ray" and "Surely you've got this straight now?" implying that it isn't straight in the novel. Such stuff is not review; it is defensiveness on the part of the critic. But on to the meat:

Delap accuses me of dumping everything into one pot, and making a smelly potpourri. Well, the small varies as the critic's nose, but let's clarify what I did and did not do. I did not dump everything in; look at my following novels for the proof of that. I did deliberately make room to cover my subjects in the detail I wanted, with no publishers' wordage limitations in mind. Thus, for example, I did not just remark that education is a mess; I gave it a full scene about as close to truth as you can come in fiction. I did not just have the hero take off in a space ship; I visited Cape Kennedy myself, took notes, and used them, and had that section checked over by Joe Green who works there. In short, I did my homework throughout the novel—and that was a great deal of homework! I doubt that any writer in the field today has done more varied and serious research for a single novel.

I'll skip over Delap's myriad inaccuracies—he seems to have comprehended virtually none of the novel—and concentrate on his main points. "And here," he opines, "Anthony makes his first mistake: he offers no convincing backbone to the argument that man must uncover the 'material and technology of the stars'..." Well, a careful reading of the first chapter alone will show that the hypothesis is that man has not reversed his course in the coming decade, and is on the brink of an ugly extinction through his own abuse of his planetary resources. Because man is

what he is, he will not change his suicidal ways; he has to have some kind of outside help or correction. The macroscopic can provide such help—if man can figure out how to use it properly. Perhaps to Delap the possibility of averting the extinction of the species is not sufficient cause to try. As for me, I believe—in and out of my fiction—that we are indeed poised over this chasm, and I want mankind to survive it, and I strongly fear that he will not—unless he has the macroscopic or something very like it. To this extent the novel is another cry of warning.

"...final, unforgiveable error...some of the most contrived and clumsy symbolism..." Symbolism, yes. Contrived, clumsy? Take a look at the credits page, Delap. I do not believe in astrology myself, but I am close to those who do, and I neither invented nor contrived that symbolism. I had legitimate horoscopes made on all the major characters—the kind you would have to pay through the nose for. (I don't know how to assess the potential price for this information, but suspect it would be several hundred dollars. Serious horoscopy does not come cheap.) The symbols of the final chapter were drawn directly from the individual horoscopes on the characters; I took them and used them as they came. Not one symbol was generated from my imagination, or selected for novelistic convenience. I did, of course, adapt them to my purpose, together with the other symbols of Sidney Lanier's The Symphony—but adaptation is not contrivance. If you really want documentation of each symbol, I can provide it. Or check a professional astrologer conversant with the Sabian symbols. (There are different schools of astrology, not necessarily in agreement with each other.) Meanwhile, kindly take my word on this: those professional astrologers who have commented to me, have been enthusiastic over the accuracy of my presentation and concept here. I hope to get the novel reviewed in some of the astrology magazines. I tried to embody the most authoritative presentation of legitimate astrology ever to appear in fiction; time will tell whether I succeeded.

"So the fatal flaw in Macroscopic is that it all adds up to nothing in particular." Well, Delap, you seem to have an excellent record for branding novels as empty, beginning with Zelazny's Lord of Light and continuing strong with Brunner's Stand on Zanzibar. I believe you are repelled by real content. But here, for your dubious benefit, is some of what you missed in Macroscopic: THE THEME: Even as the individual grows from infancy into childhood into adolescence into maturity and on into senility, so does a sapient species. This is something apart from straight biology, of course, and is more nearly cultural, but the evolution is similar for the purpose of this novel. Man, in this framework, has reached the stage of adolescence—the most dangerous stage. If he survives it, he will join the larger culture of the mature sapients. None of us can say at this stage whether he will survive (though I, personally, doubt it); that is why the issue is not resolved within the novel. If that concept and its implications add up to "nothing in particular" to you...well, reread in twenty years and you may, like Mark Twain, be surprised how much the novel has gained. (No, he didn't read Macroscopic; he referred to his father.)

Now briefly on the other reviews: I don't see them all, of

course. I understand that MOEBIUS TRIP, borrowing a technique from CROSSROADS, reviewed Macroscope in the one issue not sent to me. Sounds as though the editor used a pseudonym to mount an ill-informed attack, and lacked even then the courage to show it to me. I did, however, receive AKOS 3 with a review by Sand Meschkov—a strikingly intelligent commentary, though she did not rave over the novel. Some quotes from that: "...a space opera with symbolic significance called Macroscope using astrology and the life and works of Sidney Lanier...as his grammar of symbology." Right on target, Sand. But she says that "the story must stand on its own," not being buried or rendered incomprehensible by its symbology. I agree completely. I regret that she does not feel I succeeded in the novel, but she comprehends the technique. "But watching his decimal points and shuffling horoscopes and keeping his characters alive and breathing at the same time is something Anthony can't do as yet." Sigh. She then quotes what she assumes is my definition of astrology; sorry, that's taken directly from the text I researched, so it has more authority than that. And "This book contains the real stuff, the best unbiased primer as to what astrology is supposed to do I have come across." A-a-a-ah. All in all, the best negative critique on the novel I've seen. There is even a cartoon: woman stirring in pot, man tearing hair and crying "Soup? Beatryx! That's not soup! That's Afra!" Beautiful!

Then a pair of reviews in BE A BOHEMA's 7 and 8, both decent, favorable commentaries. Ted Pauls misunderstands the science of macronics, though he doesn't make the blunder I saw in a lettercolumn somewhere, where someone wanted to know how come you could get a horizontal picture from a vertical beam of light—something like that. (See you local TV technician for the answer...) He does feel the educational scene is "utterly superfluous to the novel." Not so—that scene was dictated by the needs of the character's horoscope (yes, I did use astrology for some of the plotting), and is relevant both to the general portrayal of the misery of our culture at the outset and to this character's own adventure later on. Education is, I maintain, one of the guidelines to what is wrong with the world today, and so it naturally is strong in this novel. I expected criticism on the relevance of the long Tyre sequence, but have had none—perhaps because that is mostly action. Tut, tut—double standard showing there, critics!

One in PHANTASMICON by the editor, who suspects I invented the macron (correct) and lifted the macroscopic notion from Taine's Before the Dawn. This is possible; I was certainly intrigued by that Taine concept, and it could have worked its way into my thinking on Macroscope, though my basic notion of a kind of electron telescope goes back long before I saw the Taine novel. I did, I think this critic will agree, a hell of a lot more with the concept than Taine did, however; in fact I show how macronics affects the entire universe, while he used it only to study dinosaurs.

And one in John Pierce's RENAISSANCE that a correspondent sent me. Well, I told Pierce long ago which chapters

to read and which to avoid; if he failed to follow my instruction, he paid the penalty. Macroscope was not intended to fit neatly into anyone's little mental cubbyhole.

Sorry if I missed any reviews; that's all I can locate at the moment.

((This type of letter, which some critics of SFR abhor as an expression of egotism by authors, is valuable for the background presented, for its view of the writer's work system, for its revelation of the writer himself...and, I think will often prompt a reader to go out and buy the book and read it, and I believe the information in this type of author response will make the reading of the book in question more rewarding.))



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I agree with those who say that at least some of John Campbell's thinking verges on fascism (i.e., the editorial that pointed out many benefits of slavery), and there are tendencies in Heinlein toward, at the very least, an elitist right wing anarchy which has been expressed all the way from Starship Troopers to Stranger (which I consider his worst book).

I have to disagree with you, however, in your answer to one letter concerning fascism on the left. It is very real and very much a menace to free expression. In twenty years of writing I've done books on many subjects, including Ronald Reagan, Martin Luther King, the Hell's Angels, flying saucers and the occult. I never ran into any political censorship (even the anti-Reagan book drew only a few letters from irate Birchers) until I tried to do a book about violence in the hippie world and another about left-wing extremism. Suddenly I, who had always considered myself a liberal, found myself up against a blank wall of censorship raised by the liberals who control the publishing field. Concerning the hippie book, my agent got such remarks as, "No, that sounds like it might be anti-hippie. We wouldn't want to see it." When it came to the political book, comments were to the effect that they were not interested in an objective view, only in "committed" works, namely, those with a far left slant. I also know that this has happened to other much better known writers, people who are scholars in their fields.

I'm beginning to think that you can't tell the fascists without a program any more.



Geis here: I wish I had more room, but I have to stop this somewhere. I'm carrying over letters by JEFF SMITH, VIRGINIA KIDD, DON THOMPSON, TED PAULS and J.J. PIERCE and WALTER BREEN. Can't resist quoting DAVID B. WILLIAMS: "It is impossible for one person to put out and mail a regular 48-page zine with a press run surpassing 1000. Just thought you'd like to know." NOW HE TELLS ME!



**'aren't we
nasty little people—looking
at treasure boxes.'**

DIANE WAKOSKI

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